

75-626

THE  
I L I A D  
OF  
H O M E R.

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Translated by  
ALEXANDER POPE, Esq;

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Te sequor, O Graiæ gentis Decus ! inque tuis nunc  
Fixa pedum pono pressis vestigia signis :  
Non ita certandi cupidus, quàm propter Amorem,  
Quòd Te imitari aveo. ————— LUCRET.

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VOLUME THE FIFTH.

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L O N D O N,

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MDCCLXXI.





THE  
TWENTY-FIRST BOOK  
OF THE  
ILIAD.

VOL. V.

B

THE  
A R G U M E N T,

The battle in the river Scamander.

*THE Trojans fly before Achilles, some towards the town, others to the river Scamander; he falls upon the latter with great slaughter, takes twelve captives alive, to sacrifice to the shade of Patroclus; and kills Lycaon and Asteropeus. Scamander attacks him with all his waves; Neptune and Pallas assist the hero; Simois joins Scamander; at length Vulcan, by the instigation of Juno, almost dries up the river. This combat ended, the other Gods engage each other. Meanwhile Achilles continues the slaughter, drives the rest into Troy: Agenor only makes a stand, and is conveyed away in a cloud by Apollo; who (to delude Achilles) takes upon him Agenor's shape, and while he pursues him in that disguise, gives the Trojans an opportunity of retiring into their city.*

*The same day continues. The scene is on the banks and in the stream of Scamander.*



THE  
\* TWENTY-FIRST BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

**A**ND now to Xanthus' gliding stream they drove,  
Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove.  
The river here divides the flying train.  
Part to the town fly diverse o'er the plain,

\* This book is entirely different from all the foregoing: though it be a battle, it is entirely of a new and surprising kind, diversified with a vast variety of imagery and description. The scene is totally changed: he paints the combat of his hero with the rivers, and describes a battle amidst an inundation. It is observable, that though the whole war of the Iliad was upon the banks of these rivers, Homer has artfully left out the machinery of River-gods in all the other battles, to aggrandize this of his hero. There is no book of the poem that has more force of imagination, or in which the great and inexhausted invention of our author is more powerfully exerted. After this description of an inundation, there follows a very beautiful contrast in that of the drought: the part of



4 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XXI.

Where late their troops triumphant bore the fight, 5  
 Now chas'd, and trembling in ignoble flight :  
 (These with a gather'd mist Saturnia shrouds,  
 And rolls behind the rout a heap of clouds)  
 Part plunge into the stream : old Xanthus roars,  
 The flashing billows beat the whiten'd shores : 10  
 With cries promiscuous all the banks resound ;  
 And here, and there, in eddies whirling round,  
 The flouncing steeds and shrieking warriors }  
 drown'd.  
 As the scorch'd locusts from their fields retire,  
 While fast behind them runs the blaze of fire ; 15

- Achilles is admirably sustained, and the new strokes which Homer gives to his picture are such, as are derived from the very source of his character, and finish the entire draught of this hero.

How far all that appears wonderful or extravagant in this episode, may be reconciled to probability, truth and natural reason, will be considered in a distinct note upon that head: the reader may find it on p. 447.

- v. 2. *Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove.*] The river is here said to be the son of Jupiter, on account of its Being supplied with waters that fall from Jupiter, that is, from heaven. *Eustathius.*

v. 14. *As the scorch'd locusts, &c.*] Eustathius observes that several countries have been much infested with armies of locusts: and that, to prevent their destroying the fruits of the earth, the countrymen by kindling large fires drove them from their fields; the locusts to avoid the intense heat were forced to cast themselves into the water. From this observation the poet draws his allusion, which

Driv'n from the land before the smoky cloud,  
The clust'ring regions rush into the flood :  
So plung'd in Xanthus by Achilles' force,  
Roars the resounding surge with men and horse.  
His bloody lance the hero casts aside, 20  
(Which spreading tam'risks on the margin hide)  
Then, like a God, the rapid billows braves,  
Arm'd with his sword high-brandish'd o'er the  
waves :

is very much to the honour of Achilles, since it represents the Trojans with respect to him as no more than so many insects.

The same commentator takes notice, that because the Island of Cyprus in particular was used to practise this method with the locusts, some authors have conjectured that Homer was of that country. But if this were a sufficient reason for such a supposition, he might be said to be born in almost all the countries of the world, since he draws his observations from the customs of them all.

We may hence account for the innumerable armies of these locusts, mentioned among the plagues of Ægypt, without having recourse to an immediate creation, as some good men have imagined ; whereas the miracle indeed consists in the wonderful manner of bringing them upon the Ægyptians. I have often observed with pleasure the similitude which many of Homer's expressions bear with the holy scriptures, and that the most ancient heathen writer in the world often speaks in the idiom of Moses : thus as the locusts in Exodus are said to be driven into the sea, so in Homer they are forced into a river.

6 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XXI

Now down he plunges, now he whirls it round,  
 Deep groan'd the waters with the dying sound ; 25  
 Repeated wounds the red'ning river dy'd,  
 And the warm purple circled on the tide.  
 Swift thro' the foamy flood the Trojans fly,  
 And close in rocks or winding caverns lie :  
 So the huge dolphin tempeſting the main, 30  
 In ſhoals before him fly the ſcaly train,  
 Confus'dly heap'd they ſeek their inmoſt caves,  
 Or pant and heave beneath the floating waves.  
 Now tir'd with ſlaughter from the Trojan band  
 Twelve choſen youths he drags alive to land ; 35

v. 30. *So the huge dolphin, &c.*] It is obſervable with what juſtneſs the author diversifies his compariſons according to the different ſcenes and elements he is engaged in: Achilles has been hitherto on the land, and compared to land-animals, a lion, &c. Now he is in the water, the poet derives his images from thence, and likens him to a dolphin. *Euſtathius.*

v. 34. *Now tir'd with ſlaughter.*] This is admirably well ſuited to the character of Achilles, his rage bears him headlong on the enemy, he kills all that oppoſe him, and ſtops not, till nature itſelf could not keep pace with his anger: he had determined to reſerve twelve noble youths to ſacrifice them to the manes of Patroclus, but his reſentment gives him no time to think of them, till the hurry of his paſſion abates, and he is tired with ſlaughter: without this circumſtance, I think an objection might naturally be raiſed, that in the time of a purſuit Achilles gave the enemy too much leiſure to eſcape, while he buſied himſelf with tying theſe priſoners: though it is

With their rich belts their captive arms constrains,  
(Late their proud ornaments, but now their chains.)  
These his attendants to the ships convey'd,  
Sad victims ! destin'd to Patroclus' shade.

Then, as once more he plung'd amid the flood, 40  
The young Lycaon in his passage stood ;

not absolutely necessary to suppose he tied them with his own hands.

v. 35. *Twelve chosen youths.*] This piece of cruelty in Achilles has appeared shocking to many, and indeed is what I think can only be excused by considering the ferocious and vindictive spirit of this hero. It is however certain that the cruelties exercised on enemies in war were authorised by the military laws of those times ; nay, religion itself became a sanction to them. It is not only the fierce Achilles, but the pious and religious Æneas, whose very character is virtue and compassion, that reserves several young unfortunate captives taken in battle, to sacrifice them to the *Manes* of his favourite hero. *Æn.* xi. v. 517.

“ — — — Sulmone creatos

“ Quatuor hic juvenes, totidem quos educat Ufens,

“ Viventes rapit ; inferias quos immolet umbris,

“ Captivoque rogi perfundat sanguine flammam.”

And *Æn.* xi. v. 81.

“ Vinxerat & post terga manus, quos mitteret umbris

“ Inferias, cæso sparsuros sanguine flammam.”

And (what is very particular) the Latin poet expresses no disapprobation of this action, which the Grecian does in plain terms, speaking of this in *Iliad* xxiii. v. 176.

— — — κατὰ δὲ φρεσὶ μέδιστο Ἴδμεν

v. 41. *The young Lycaon, &c.*] Homer has a wonderful



8 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XXI.

The son of Priam, whom the hero's hand  
 But late made captive in his father's land,  
 (As from a sycamore, his sounding steel  
 Lopp'd the green arms to spoke a chariot-wheel) 46  
 To Lemnos isle he sold the royal slave,  
 Where Jason's son the price demanded gave ;  
 But kind Eëtion touching on the shore,  
 The ransom'd prince to fair Arisbe bore.  
 Ten days were past, since in his father's reign 50  
 He felt the sweets of liberty again ;  
 The next, that God whom men in vain withstand,  
 Gives the same youth to the same conqu'ring  
 hand ;

art and judgment in contriving such incidents as set the characteristick qualities of his heroes in the highest point of light. There is hardly any in the whole Iliad more proper to move pity than this circumstance of Lycaon ; or to raise terrour, than this view of Achilles. It is also the finest picture of them both imaginable. We see the different attitude of their persons, and the different passions which appeared in their countenances : at first Achilles stands erect, with surprise in his looks at the sight of one whom he thought it impossible to find there ; while Lycaon is in the posture of a suppliant, with looks that plead for compassion ; with one hand holding the hero's lance, and his knee with the other : afterwards, when at his death he lets go the spear, and places himself on his knees with his arms extended, to receive the mortal wound, how lively and how strongly is this painted ? I believe every one perceives the beauty of this passage, and allows that poetry (at least in Homer) is truly a speaking picture.

Book XXI. HOMER'S ILIAD. 69

Now never to return ! and doom'd to go  
A sadder journey to the shades below. 55

His well-known face when great Achilles ey'd,  
(The helm and visor he had cast aside  
With wild affright, and dropp'd upon the field  
His useless lance and unavailing shield.)

As trembling, panting, from the stream he fled, 60  
And knock'd his salt'ring knees, the hero said.

Ye mighty Gods ! what wonders strike my view !  
Is it in vain our conqu'ring arms subdue ?  
Sure I shall see yon' heaps of Trojans kill'd,  
Rise from the shades, and brave me on the field :

As now the captive, whom so late I bound 66  
And sold to Lemnos, stalks on Trojan ground !  
Not him the sea's unmeasur'd deeps detain,  
That bar such numbers from their native plain :

Lo ! he returns. Try, then, my flying spear ! 70  
Try, if the grave can hold the wanderer ;  
If earth at length this active prince can seize,  
Earth, whose strong grasp has held down Hercules.

Thus while he spake, the Trojan pale with fears  
Approach'd, and sought his knees with suppliant  
tears ; 75

Loth as he was to yield his youthful breath,  
And his soul shiv'ring at th' approach of death.  
Achilles rais'd the spear, prepar'd to wound ;  
He kiss'd his feet, extended on the ground :  
And while, above, the spear suspended stood, 80  
Longing to dip its thirsty point in blood,

One hand embrac'd them close, one stopt the dart,  
While thus these melting words attempt his heart.

Thy well-known captive, great Achilles ! see,  
Once more Lycaon trembles at thy knee. 85  
Some pity to a suppliant's name afford,  
Who shar'd the gifts of Ceres at thy board ;  
Whom late thy conqu'ring arm to Lemnos bore,  
Far from his father, friends, and native shore ;  
A hundred oxen were his price that day, 90  
Now sums immense thy mercy shall repay.

v. 84. *The speeches of Lycaon and Achilles.*] It is impossible for any thing to be better imagined than these two speeches : that of Lycaon is moving and compassionate, that of Achilles haughty and dreadful ; the one pleads with the utmost tenderness, the other denies with the utmost sternness : one would think it impossible to amass so many moving arguments in so few words as those of Lycaon : he forgets no circumstance to soften his enemy's anger, he flatters the memory of Patroclus, is afraid of being thought too nearly related to Hector, and would willingly put himself upon him as a suppliant, and consequently as an inviolable person : but Achilles is immovable, his resentment makes him deaf to entreaties, and it must be remembered that anger, not mercy, is his character.

I must confess I could have wished Achilles had spared him : there are so many circumstances that speak in his favour, that he deserved his life, had he not asked it in terms a little too abject.

There is an air of greatness in the conclusion of the speech of Achilles, which strikes me very much : he speaks very unconcernedly of his own death, and upbraids his enemy for asking life so earnestly, a life that was of so much less importance than his own.

Scarce respited from woes I yet appear,  
 And scarce twelve morning suns have seen me here;  
 Lo! Jove again submits me to thy hands,  
 Again, her victim cruel Fate demands! 95  
 I sprung from Priam, and Laothœe fair,  
 (Old Alte's daughter, and Lelegia's heir;  
 Who held in Pedafus his fam'd abode,  
 And rul'd the fields where silver Satnio flow'd)  
 Two sons (alas! unhappy sons) she bore; 100  
 For ah! one spear shall drink each brother's gore,  
 And I succeed to slaughter'd Polydore.  
 How from that arm of terrour shall I fly?  
 Some dæmon urges! 'tis my doom to die!  
 If ever yet soft pity touch'd thy mind, 105  
 Ah! think not me too much of Hector's kind!  
 Not the same mother gave thy suppliant breath,  
 With his, who wrought thy lov'd Patroclus' death.  
 These words, attended with a show'r of tears,  
 The youth address'd to unrelenting ears; 110  
 Talk not of life, or ransom, (he replies)  
 Patroclus dead, whoever meets me, dies:  
 In vain a single Trojan sues for grace;  
 But least, the sons of Priam's hateful race.  
 Die then, my friend! what boots it to deplore! 115  
 The great, the good Patroclus is no more!  
 He, far thy better, was foredoom'd to die,  
 "And thou, dost thou, bewail mortality?"  
 See'st thou not me, whom nature's gifts adorn,  
 Sprung from a hero, from a Goddess born; 120



The day shall come (which nothing can avert)  
 When by the spear, the arrow, or the dart,  
 By night, or day, by force or by design,  
 Impending death and certain fate are mine.  
 Die then—he said; and as the word he spoke 125  
 The fainting stripling sunk, before the stroke:  
 His hand forgot its grasp, and left the spear:  
 While all his trembling frame confess'd his fear;  
 Sudden, Achilles his broad sword display'd,  
 And buried in his neck the reeking blade. 130  
 Prone fell the youth; and panting on the land,  
 The gushing purple dy'd the thirsty sand;  
 The victor to the stream the carcase gave,  
 And thus insults him, floating on the wave.

Lie there, Lycaon! let the fish surround 135  
 Thy bloated corse, and suck thy gory wound:  
 There no sad mother shall thy fun'ral weep,  
 But swift Scamander roll thee to the deep,  
 Whose ev'ry wave some wat'ry monster brings,  
 To feast unpunish'd on the fat of kings. 140  
 So perish Troy, and all the Trojan line!  
 Such ruin theirs, and such compassion mine.

v. 121. *The day shall come* ———

*When by the spear, the arrow, or the dart.]*

This is not spoken at random, but with an air of superiority; when Achilles says he shall fall by an arrow, a dart, or a spear, he insinuates that no man will have the courage to approach him in a close fight, or engage him hand to hand. *Eustathius.*

Book XXI. HOMER'S ILIAD. 13

What boots ye now Scamander's worshipp'd stream,  
 His earthly honours, and immortal name ;  
 In vain your immolated bulls are slain, 145  
 Your living coursers glut his gulphs in vain :  
 Thus he rewards you, with this bitter fate ;  
 Thus, 'till the Grecian vengeance is compleat ;  
 Thus is aton'd Patroclus' honour'd shade,  
 And the short absence of Achilles paid. 150  
 These boastful words provoke the raging God ;  
 With fury swells the violated flood.  
 What means divine may yet the pow'r employ,  
 To check Achilles, and to rescue Troy ?

v. 146. *Your living coursers glut his gulphs in vain.*] It was an ancient custom to cast living horses into the sea, and into rivers, to honour, as it were, by these victims, the rapidity of their streams. This practice continued a long time, and history supplies us with examples of it: Aurelius Victor says of Pompey the younger, *Cum mari feliciter uteretur, Neptuni se filium confessus est, eumque bobus auratis & equo placavit.* He offered oxen in sacrifice, and threw a living horse into the sea, as appears from Dion, which is perfectly conformable to this of Homer. *Eustathius, Dacier,*

v. 152. *With fury swells the violated flood.*] The poet has been preparing us for the episode of the river Xanthus ever since the beginning of the last book: and here he gives us an account why the river wars upon Achilles: it is not only because he is a river of Troas, but, as Eustathius remarks, because it is in defence of a man that was descended from a brother River-God: he was angry too with Achilles on another account, because he had choaked up his current with the bodies of his countrymen, the Trojans.

Meanwhile the hero springs in arms, to dare 155  
 The great Asteropeus to mortal war ;  
 The son of Pelagon, whose lofty line  
 Flows from the source of Axius, stream divine !  
 (Fair Peribæa's love the God had crown'd,  
 With all his reflux waters circled round) 160  
 On him Achilles rush'd : he fearless stood,  
 And shook two spears, advancing from the flood ;  
 The flood impell'd him, on Pelides' head  
 T' avenge his waters chok'd with heaps of dead.  
 Near as they drew, Achilles thus began. 165  
 What art thou, boldest of the race of man ?  
 Who, or from whence ? Unhappy is the fire,  
 Whose son encounters our resistless ire.  
 O son of Peleus ! what avails to trace  
 (Reply'd the warrior) our illustrious race ? 170  
 From rich Pæonia's valleys I command  
 Arm'd with protended spears, my native band ;

v. 171. *From rich Pæonia's—&c.* In the Catalogue Py-  
 ræchmes is said to be commander of the Pæonians, where  
 they are described as bow-men ; but here they are said  
 to be armed with spears, and to have Asteropeus for their  
 general. Eustathius tells us, some criticks asserted that  
 this line in the Cat. v. 355.

Πυλαγόνος δ' υἱὸς ἀσπερίδης Ἀρεοπαῖος,

followed

Ἄυλᾶς Πυραΐχμης ἀγὼ Παίονας ἀγκυλολόχους.

But I see no reason for such an assertion. Homer has ex-  
 pressly told us in this speech that it was but ten days since  
 he came to the aid of Troy ; he might be made general of

Now shines the tenth bright morning since I came  
In aid of Ilion to the fields of fame: 174

Axius, who swells with all the neighb'ring rills,  
And wide around the floated region fills,  
Begot my fire, whole spear such glory won:  
Now lift thy arm, and try that hero's son!

Threat'ning he said: the hostile chiefs advance;  
At once Afteropeus discharg'd each lance, 180  
(For both his dext'rous hands the lance cou'd wield)  
One struck, but pierc'd not the Vulcanian shield;  
One raz'd Achilles' hand; the spouting blood  
Spun forth, in earth the fasten'd weapon stood.  
Like light'ning next the Pelian jav'lin flies: 185  
Its erring fury hiss'd along the skies;  
Deep in the swelling bank was driv'n the spear,  
Ev'n to the middle earth'd; and quiver'd there.

the Pæonians upon the death of Pyræchmes, who was killed in the sixteenth book. Why also might not the Pæonians, as well as Teucer, excel in the management both of the bow and the spear?

v. 187. *Deep in the swelling bank was driv'n the spear,  
Ev'n to the middle earth'd;—]*

It was impossible for the poet to give us a greater idea of the strength of Achilles, than he has by this circumstance: his spear pierced so deep into the ground, that another hero of great strength could not disengage it by repeated efforts; but immediately after, Achilles draws it with the utmost ease: how prodigious was the force of that arm that could drive at one throw a spear half way into the earth, and then with a touch release it?



Then from his side the sword Pelides drew,  
And on his foe with doubled fury flew. 190  
The foe thrice tugg'd, and shook the rooted wood;  
Repulsive of his might the weapon stood:  
The fourth, he tries to break the spear, in vain;  
Bent as he stands, he tumbles to the plain;  
His belly open'd with a ghastly wound, 195  
The reeking entrails pour upon the ground.  
Beneath the hero's feet he panting lies,  
And his eye darkens, and his spirit flies:  
While the proud victor thus triumphing said,  
His radiant armour tearing from the dead: 200

So ends thy glory! Such the fate they prove  
Who strive presumptuous with the sons of Jove.  
Sprung from a river, didst thou boast thy line?  
But great Saturnius is the source of mine.  
How durst thou vaunt thy wat'ry progeny? 205  
Of Peleus, Æacus, and Jove, am I;  
The race of these superiour far to those,  
As he that thunders to the stream that flows.  
What rivers can, Scamander might have shown;  
But Jove he dreads, nor wars against his son. 210  
Ev'n Achelöus might contend in vain,  
And all the roaring billows of the main.  
Th' eternal ocean, from whose fountains flow  
The seas, the rivers, and the springs below,  
The thund'ring voice of Jove abhors to hear, 215  
And in his deep abysses shakes with fear.

He said ; then from the bank his jav'lin tore,  
And left the breathless warrior in his gore.  
The floating tides the bloody carcase lave,  
And beat against it, wave succeeding wave ; 220  
'Till roll'd between the banks, it lies the food  
Of curling eels, and fishes of the flood.  
All scatter'd round the stream (their mightiest slain)  
Th' amaz'd Pæonians scour along the plain :  
He vents his fury on the flying crew, 225  
Thrasius, Astypylus, and Mnesius flew ;  
Mydon, Therfilochus, with Ænius fell ;  
And numbers more his lance had plung'd to hell ;  
But from the bottom of his gulfs profound,  
Scamander spoke ; the shores return'd the sound.

O first of mortals ! (for the Gods are thine) 231  
In valour matchless, and in force divine !  
If Jove have giv'n thee ev'ry Trojan head,  
'Tis not on me thy rage should heap the dead.  
See ! my chok'd streams no more their course can  
keep, 235

Nor roll their wonted tribute to the deep.  
Turn then, impetuous ! from our injur'd flood ;  
Content, thy slaughters could amaze a God.

In human form, confess'd before his eyes,  
The river thus ; and thus the chief replies. 240  
O sacred stream ! thy word we shall obey ;  
But not 'till Troy the destin'd vengeance pay,  
Not 'till within her tow'rs the perjur'd train  
Shall pant, and tremble at our arms again ;

Not 'till proud Hector, guardian of her wall, 245  
Or stain this lance, or see Achilles fall.

He said ; and drove with fury on the foe.  
Then to the godhead of the silver bow  
The yellow flood began : O son of Jove !  
Was not the mandate of the fire above 250  
Full and express ? that Phœbus should employ  
His sacred arrows in defence of Troy,  
And make her conquer, 'till Hyperion's fall  
In awful darkness hide the face of all ? 254

He spoke in vain—the chief without dismay  
Ploughs thro' the boiling surge his desp'rate way.  
Then rising in his rage above the shores,  
From all his deep the bellowing river roars,  
Huge heaps of slain disgorges on the coast,  
And round the banks the ghastly dead are tost. 260  
While all before, the billows rang'd on high  
(A wat'ry bulwark) skreen the bands who fly.  
Now bursting on his head with thund'ring sound,  
The falling deluge whelms the hero round :

v. 263. *Now bursting on his head, &c.*] There is a great beauty in the versification of this whole passage in Homer : some of the verses run hoarse, full and sonorous, like the torrent they describe ; others by their broken cadences, and sudden stops, image the difficulty, labour, and interruption of the hero's march against it. The fall of the elm, the tearing up of the bank, the rushing of the branches in the water, are all put into such words, that almost every letter corresponds in its sound, and echoes to the sense, of each particular.

His loaded shield bends to the rushing tide ; 265  
 His feet, upborn, scarce the strong flood divide,  
 Slidd'ring, and stagg'ring. On the border stood  
 A spreading elm, that overhung the flood ;  
 He seiz'd a bending bough, his steps to stay ;  
 The plant uprooted to his weight gave way, 270  
 Heaving the bank, and undermining all ;  
 Loud flash the waters to the rushing fall  
 Of the thick foliage. The large trunk display'd  
 Bridg'd the rough flood across : the hero stay'd  
 On this his weight, and rais'd upon his hand, 275  
 Leapt from the channel, and regain'd the land.  
 Then blacken'd the wild waves ; the murmur rose ;  
 The God pursues, a huger billow throws,

v. 274. *Bridg'd the rough flood across :—*] If we had no other account of the river Xanthus but this, it were alone sufficient to shew that the current could not be very wide ; for the poet here says that the elm stretched from bank to bank, and as it were made a bridge over it : the suddenness of this inundation perfectly well agrees with a narrow river.

v. 276. *Leapt from the channel.*] Eustathius recites a criticism on this verse, in the original the word *Δίμν* signifies *stagnum, palus, a standing water* ; now this is certainly contrary to the idea of a river, which always implies a *current* : to solve this, says that author, some have supposed that the tree which lay across the river stopped the flow of the waters, and forced them to spread as it were into a pool. Others, dissatisfied with this solution, think that a mistake is crept into the text, and that instead of *ἐν Δίμνι*, should be inserted *ἐν Δίμνι*. But I do



And bursts the bank, ambitious to destroy  
 The man whose fury is the fate of Troy. 280  
 He, like the warlike eagle speeds his pace,  
 (Swiftest and strongest of th' aerial race)  
 Far as a spear can fly, Achilles springs  
 At ev'ry bound; his clanging armour rings:  
 Now here, now there, he turns on ev'ry side, 285  
 And winds his course before the following tide;  
 The waves flow after, wheresoe'er he wheels,  
 And gather fast, and murmur at his heels.  
 So when a peasant to his garden brings  
 Soft rills of water from the bubbling springs, 290  
 And calls the floods from high, to bless his bow'rs,  
 And feed with pregnant streams the plants and  
 flow'rs;

not see the necessity of having recourse to either of these solutions; for why may not the word *Alpam* signify here the *channel* of the river, as it evidently does in the 317th verse of the original? And nothing being more common than to substitute a part for the whole, why may not the channel be supposed to imply the whole river?

v. 289. *So when a peasant to his garden brings, &c.*] This changing of the character is very beautiful; no poet ever knew, like Homer, to pass from the vehement and the nervous, to the gentle and agreeable; such transitions, when properly made, give a singular pleasure, as when in musick a master passes from the rough to the tender. Demetrius Phalereus, who only praises this comparison for its clearness, has not sufficiently recommended its beauty and value. Virgil has transferred it into his first book of the Georgicks, v. 106.

Book XXI. HOMER'S ILIAD. 21

Soon as he clears whate'er their passage staid,  
And marks the future current with his spade,  
Swift o'er the rolling pebbles, down the hills 295  
Louder and louder purl the falling rills,  
Before him scatt'ring, they prevent his pains,  
And shine in mazy wand'rings o'er the plains.

Still flies Achilles, but before his eyes  
Still swift Scamander rolls where'er he flies: 300  
Not all his speed escapes the rapid floods;  
The first of men, but not a match for Gods.  
Oft' as he turn'd the torrent to oppose,  
And bravely try if all the pow'rs were foes;  
So oft' the furge in wat'ry mountains spread, 305  
Beat on his back, or bursts upon his head.  
Yet dauntless still the adverse flood he braves,  
And still indignant bounds above the waves.  
Tir'd by the tides, his knees relax with toil;  
Wash'd from beneath him slides the slimy soil; 310  
When thus (his eyes on Heav'n's expansion  
thrown)

Forth bursts the hero with an angry groan.

Is there no God Achilles to befriend,  
No Pow'r t' avert his miserable end?

" Deinde satis fluvium inducit, rivosque sequentes :

" Et cùm exustus ager morientibus æstuat herbis,

" Ecce supercilio clivosi tramitis undam

" Elicit: illa cadens raucum per levia murmur

" Saxa ciet, skatebrisque arentia temperat arva."

Dacier.

Prevent, oh Jove ! this ignominious date, 315  
 And make my future life the sport of Fate.  
 Of all Heav'n's oracles believ'd in vain,  
 But most of Thetis, must her son complain ;  
 By Phœbus darts the prophesy'd my fall,  
 In glorious arms before the Trojan wall. 320  
 Oh ! had I dy'd in fields of battle warm,  
 Stretch'd like a hero, by a hero's arm !

v. 321. *Oh ! had I dy'd in fields of battle warm, &c.* ] Nothing is more agreeable than this wish to the heroick character of Achilles : glory is his prevailing passion ; he grieves not that he must die, but that he should die unlike a man of honour. Virgil has made use of the same thought in the same circumstance, where Æneas is in danger of being drowned, *Æn. i. v. 98.*

“ — — — O terque quaterque beati,  
 “ Queis ante ora patrum, Trojæ sub mœnibus altis,  
 “ Contigit oppetere ! O Danaûm fortissime gentis  
 “ Tydide, mene Iliacis occumbere campis  
 “ Non potuisse ? tuâque animam hanc effundere dextrâ ?”

Lucan, in the fifth book of his *Pharsalia*, representing Cæsar in the same circumstance, has (I think) carried yet farther the character of ambition, and a boundless thirst of glory, in his hero ; when, after he has repined in the same manner with Achilles, he acquiesces at last in the reflection of the glory he had already acquired ;

“ — — — — Licet ingentes abruperit actus  
 “ Festinata dies fatis, sat magna peregi.  
 “ Arctoas domui gentes : inimica subegi  
 “ Arma manu : vidit Magnum mihi Roma secundum.”

Might Hector's spear this dauntless bosom rend,  
 And my swift soul o'ertake my slaughter'd friend !  
 Ah no ! Achilles meets a shameful fate, 325  
 Oh how unworthy of the brave and great !  
 Like some vile swain, whom on a rainy day,  
 Crossing a ford, the torrent sweeps away,  
 An unregarded carcase, to the sea. }

Neptune and Pallas haste to his relief, ' 330  
 And thus in human form address the chief :  
 The pow'r of Ocean first. Forbear thy fear,  
 O son of Peleus ! Lo thy Gods appear !  
 Behold ! from Jove descending to thy aid,  
 Propitious Neptune, and the blue-ey'd Maid. 335  
 Stay, and the furious flood shall cease to rave :  
 'Tis not thy fate to glut his angry wave.  
 But thou, the counsel Heav'n suggests, attend !  
 Nor breathe from combat, nor thy sword suspend,  
 'Till Troy receive her flying sons, 'till all 340  
 Her routed squadrons pant behind their wall :  
 Hector alone shall stand his fatal chance,  
 And Hector's blood shall smoke upon thy lance.  
 Thine is the glory doom'd. Thus spake the Gods :  
 Then swift ascended to the bright abodes. 345

And only wishes that his obscure fate might be concealed,  
 in the view that all the world might still fear and expect  
 him.

" — — — — — Lacerum retinete cadaver  
 " Fluctibus in mediis ; desint mihi busta, rogusque,  
 " Dum metuar semper, terrâque expecter ab omni."



Stung with new ardour, thus by Heav'n impell'd,  
 He springs impetuous, and invades the field ;  
 O'er all th' expanded plain the waters spread ;  
 Heav'd on the bounding billows danc'd the dead,  
 Floating 'midst scatter'd arms ; while casques of  
 gold

350

And turn'd-up bucklers glitter'd as they roll'd.  
 High o'er the furling tide, by leaps and bounds,  
 He wades, and mounts ; the parted wave resounds.  
 Not a whole river stops the hero's course,  
 While Pallas fills him with immortal force. 355  
 With equal rage, indignant Xanthus roars,  
 And lifts his billows, and o'erwhelms his shores.

Then thus to Simois : Haste, my brother flood !  
 And check this mortal that controlls a God :  
 Our bravest heroes else shall quit the fight, 360  
 And Ilion tumble from her tow'ry height.  
 Call then thy subject streams, and bid them roar,  
 From all thy fountains swell thy wat'ry store,  
 With broken rocks, and with a load of dead  
 Charge the black surge, and pour it on his head. 365  
 Mark how resistless thro' the floods he goes,  
 And boldly bids the warring Gods be foes !  
 But nor that force, nor form divine to fight  
 Shall ought avail him, if our rage unite :  
 Whelm'd under our dark gulfs those arms shall  
 lie,

370

That blaze so dreadful in each Trojan eye ;

And deep beneath a sandy mountain hurl'd,  
 Immers'd remain this terrour of the world.  
 Such pond'rous ruin shall confound the place,  
 No Greek shall e'er his perish'd relicks grace, 375  
 No hand his bones shall gather, or inhume;  
 These his cold rites, and this his wat'ry tomb.

He said; and on the chief descends amain,  
 Increas'd with gore, and swelling with the slain.  
 Then murm'ring from his beds, he boils, he raves,  
 And a foam whitens on the purple waves: 381  
 At ev'ry step, before Achilles stood  
 The crimson surge, and delug'd him with blood.  
 Fear touch'd the Queen of heav'n: she saw dis-  
 may'd,

She call'd aloud, and summon'd Vulcan's aid. 385

Rise to the war! th' insulting flood requires  
 Thy wasteful arm: assemble all thy fires!  
 While to their aid, by our command enjoin'd,  
 Rush the swift eastern and the western wind:  
 These from old Ocean at my word shall blow, 390  
 Pour the red torrent on the wat'ry foe,  
 Corsets and arms to one bright ruin turn,  
 And hissing rivers to their bottoms burn.  
 Go, mighty in thy rage! display thy pow'r, 394  
 Drink the whole flood, the crackling trees devour,  
 Scorch all the banks! and ('till our voice reclaim)  
 Exert th' unweary'd furies of the flame!

Th' Pow'r ignipotent her word obeys:  
 Wide o'er the plain he pours the boundless blaze;

At once consumes the dead, and dries the soil ; 400  
And the shrunk waters in their channel boil.

As when autumnal Boreas sweeps the sky,  
And instant blows the water'd gardens dry :

So look'd the field, so whiten'd was the ground,  
While Vulcan breath'd the fiery blast around. 405

Swift on the sedgy reeds the ruin preys ;

Along the margin winds the running blaze :

The trees in flaming rows to ashes turn,

The flow'ry lotos, and the tam'risk burn,

Broad elm, and cypress rising in a spire ; 410

The wat'ry willows hiss before the fire.

Now glow the waves, the fishes pant for breath,

The eels lie twisting in the pangs of death :

v. 405. *While Vulcan breath'd the fiery blast around.*] It is in the original, v. 355.

Πνοὴν τριβόμενοι πολυμήτιος Ἡφαίστιο.

The epithet given to Vulcan in this verse (as well as in the 367th) Ἡφαίστιο πολυμήτιος, has no sort of allusion to the action described : for what has *wisdom* or *knowledge* to do with burning up the river Xanthus ? This is usual in our author, and much exclaimed against by his modern antagonists, whom Mr. Boileau very well answers. " It is " not so strange in Homer to give these epithets to persons " upon occasions which can have no reference to them ; " the same is frequent in modern languages, in which we " call a man by the name of *Saint*, when we speak of any " action of his that has not the least regard to his *sanctity* : " as when we say, for example, that St. Paul held the " garments of those who stoned St. Stephen."

Book XX. HOMER'S ILIAD. 27

Now flounce aloft, now dive the scaly fry,  
Or gasping, turn their bellies to the sky. 415

At length the river rear'd his languid head,  
And thus, short-panting, to the God he said.

Oh Vulcan ! oh ! what pow'r resists thy might ?  
I faint, I sink, unequal to the fight——

I yield—Let Ilion fall ; if Fate decree 420

Ah—bend no more thy fiery arms on me !

He ceas'd ; wide conflagration blazing round ;  
The bubbling waters yield a hissing sound.

As when the flames beneath a caldron rise,  
To melt the fat of some rich sacrifice, 425

Amid the fierce embrace of circling fires  
The waters foam, the heavy smoke aspires :

So boils th' imprison'd flood, forbid to flow,  
And chok'd with vapours, feels his bottom glow.

v. 424. *As when the flames beneath a caldron rise.*] It is impossible to render literally such passages with any tolerable beauty. These ideas can never be made to shine in English, some particularities cannot be preserved ; but the Greek language gives them lustre, the words are noble and musical.

Ὡς δὲ λέως ζεῖ ἔνδον ἐπειγόμενος πυρὶ πολλῷ,  
κνίσσῃ μελδόμενος ἀπαλοῖρεφέῃσι χιάλοις,  
Πάνοθεν ἀμφοράδην, ὑπὸ δὲ ξύλῳ κἀγκῆ ἀνα κείται.

All therefore that can be expected from a translator is to preserve the meaning of the simile, and embellish it with some words of affinity that carry nothing low in the sense or sound.



To Juno then, imperial queen of air, 439  
The burning river sends his earnest pray'r.

Ah why, Saturnia! must thy son engage  
Me, only me, with all his wasteful rage?  
On other Gods his dreadful arm employ,  
For mightier Gods assert the cause of Troy. 435  
Submissive I desist, if thou command;  
But ah! withdraw this all-destroying hand.  
Hear then my solemn oath, to yield to Fate  
Unaided Ilion, and her destin'd state,  
'Till Greece shall gird her with destructive flame,  
And in one ruin sink the Trojan name. 441

His warm intreaty touch'd Saturnia's ear:  
She bade th' Ignipotent his rage forbear,  
Recall the flame, nor in a mortal cause  
Infest a God; th' obedient flame withdraws: 445  
Again, the branching streams begin to spread,  
And soft re-murmur in their wonted bed.

v. 447. *And soft re-murmur in their wonted bed.*] Here ends the *episode* of the *river-fight*; and I must here lay before the reader my thoughts upon the whole of it: which appears to be in part an allegory, and in part a true history. Nothing can give a better idea of Homer's manner of enlivening his inanimate machines, and of making the plainest and simplest incidents noble and poetical, than to consider the whole passage in the common historical sense, which I suppose to be no more than this. There happened a great overflow of the river Xanthus during the siege, which very much incommoded the assailants: this gave occasion for the fiction of an engagement between Achilles

While these by Juno's will the strife resign,  
The warring Gods in fierce contention join:

and the River-god : Xanthus calling Simois to assist him, implies that these two neighbouring rivers joined in the inundation : Pallas and Neptune relieve Achilles ; that is, Pallas, or the *wisdom of Achilles*, found some means to divert the waters, and turn them into the *sea* ; wherefore Neptune, the God of it, is feigned to assist him. Jupiter and Juno (by which are understood the aerial regions) consent to aid Achilles ; that may signify, that after this great flood there happened a warm, dry, windy season, which assuaged the waters, and dried the ground : and what makes this in a manner plain, is, that Juno (which signifies the *air*) promises to send the *north* and *west winds* to distress the river. Xanthus being consumed by Vulcan, that is dried up with heat, prays to Juno to relieve him : what is this, but that the drought having drunk up his streams, he has recourse to the *air* for rains to re-supply his current ? Or, perhaps the whole may signify no more, than that Achilles being on the farther side of the river, plunged himself, in to pursue the enemy ; that in this adventure he run the risk of being drowned ; that to save himself he laid hold on a fallen tree, which served to keep him afloat ; that he was still carried down the stream to the place where was the confluence of the two rivers (which is expressed by the one calling the other to his aid) and that when he came nearer the sea [Neptune] he found means by his prudence [Pallas] to save himself from his danger.

If the reader still should think, the fiction of rivers, speaking and fighting, is too bold ; the objection will vanish by considering, how much the heathen mythology authorises the representation of rivers as persons : nay,

Re-kindling rage each heav'nly breast alarms ; 450  
 With horrid clangor shock'd th' æthereal arms :  
 Heav'n in loud thunder bids the trumpet sound ;  
 And wide beneath them groans the rending ground.  
 Jove, as his sport, the dreadful scene descries,  
 And views contending Gods with careless eyes. 455  
 The Pow'r of battles lifts his brazen spear,  
 And first assaults the radiant Queen of War.

even in old historians nothing is more common than stories of rapes committed by River-gods ; and the fiction was no way unprecedented, after one of the same nature so well known, as the engagement between Hercules and the river Achelous.

v. 454. *Jove, as his sport, the dreadful scene descries,  
 And views contending Gods with careless eyes.]*

I was at a loss for the reason why Jupiter is said to smile at the discord of the Gods, till I found it in Eustathius ; Jupiter, says he, who is the lord of nature, is well pleased with the war of the Gods, that is, of earth, sea, and air, &c. because the harmony of all beings arises from that discord : thus, earth is opposite to water, air to earth, and water to them all ; and yet from this opposition arises that discordant concord by which all nature subsists. Thus heat and cold, moist and dry, are in a continual war, yet upon this depends the fertility of the earth, and the beauty of the creation. So that Jupiter, who according to the Greeks is the soul of all, may well be said to smile at this contention.

v. 456. *The Pow'r of battles, &c.]* The combat of Mars and Pallas is plainly allegorical : justice and wisdom demanded that an end should be put to this terrible war : the God of war opposes this, but is worsted. Eustathius

What mov'd thy madness, thus to dis-unite  
 Æthereal minds, and mix all Heav'n in fight?  
 What wonder this, when in thy frantick mood  
 Thou drov'st a mortal to insult a God? 461  
 Thy impious hand Tydides' jav'lin bore,  
 And madly bath'd it in celestial gore.

He spoke, and smote the loud-resounding shield,  
 Which bears Jove's thunder on its dreadful field;  
 The adamantine Ægis of her Sire, 466  
 That turns the glancing bolt, and forked fire.  
 Then heav'd the Goddess in her mighty hand  
 A stone, the limit of the neighb'ring land,

says that this holds forth the opposition of rage and wisdom; and no sooner has our reason subdued one temptation, but another succeeds to reinforce it, as Venus succours Mars. The poet seems farther to insinuate, that reason when it resists a temptation vigorously, easily overcomes it: so it is with the utmost facility, that Pallas conquers both Mars and Venus. He adds, that Pallas retreated from Mars in order to conquer him: this shews us that the best way to subdue a temptation is to retreat from it.

v. 468. *Then heav'd the Goddess in her mighty hand  
 A stone, &c.]*

The poet has described many of his heroes in former parts of his poem, as throwing stones of enormous bulk and weight; but here he rises in his image: he is describing a Goddess, and has found a way to make that action excel all human strength, and be equal to a Deity.

Virgil has imitated this passage in his twelfth book, and applied it to Turnus; but I cannot help thinking that



There fix'd from eldest times ; black, craggy, vast :  
This at the heav'nly homicide she cast. 471

Thund'ring he falls, a mass of monstrous size ;

And sev'n broad acres covers as he lies.

The stunning stroke his stubborn nerves unbound ;

Loud o'er the fields his ringing arms resound ; 475

The scornful dame her conquests views with smiles,

And glorying thus, the prostrate God reviles.

Hast thou not yet, insatiate fury ! known

How far Minerva's force transcends thy own ?

the action in a mortal is somewhat extravagantly imagin-  
ed : what principally renders it so, is an addition of two  
lines to this simile which he borrows from another part  
of Homer, only with this difference, that whereas Ho-  
mer says no two men could raise such a stone, Virgil ex-  
tends it to twelve.

“ — — — Saxum circumspicit ingens

“ Saxum antiquum, ingens, campo quod forte jacebat,

“ Limes agro positus, litem ut discerneret arvis.”

(There is a beauty in the repetition, of *saxum ingens*, in  
the second line ; it makes us dwell upon the image,  
and gives us leisure to consider the vastness of the stone :)  
the other two lines are as follow ;

“ Vix illud, lecti bis sex cervice subirent,

“ Qualia nunc hominum producit corpora tellus.”

May I be allowed to think too, they are not so well intro-  
duced in Virgil ? For it is just after Turnus is described as  
weakened and oppressed with fears and ill omens ; it ex-  
ceeds probability ; and Turnus, methinks, looks more  
like a knight-errant in a romance, than an hero in an epick  
poem.

Juno, whom thou rebellious dar'st withstand, 480  
 Corrects thy folly thus by Pallas' hand ;  
 Thus meets thy broken faith with just disgrace,  
 And partial aid to Troy's perfidious race.

The Goddess spoke, and turn'd her eyes away,  
 That beaming round, diffus'd celestial day. 485  
 Jove's Cyprian daughter, stooping on the land,  
 Lent to the wounded God her tender hand :  
 Slowly he rises, scarcely breathes with pain,  
 And propt on her fair arm, forsakes the plain.  
 This the bright Empress of the heav'ns survey'd, 490  
 And scoffing, thus, to War's victorious maid.

Lo ! what an aid on Mars's side is seen !  
 The Smiles and Love's unconquerable queen !  
 Mark with what insolence, in open view,  
 She moves : let Pallas, if she dares, pursue. 495

Minerva smiling heard, the pair o'ertook,  
 And slightly on her breast the wanton strook :  
 She, unresisting, fell ; (her spirits fled)  
 On earth together lay the lovers spread.  
 And like these heroes, be the fate of all 500  
 (Minerva cries) who guard the Trojan wall !  
 To Grecian Gods such let the Phrygian be,  
 So dread, so fierce, as Venus is to me ;

Then from the lowest stone shall Troy be mov'd—  
Thus she, and Juno with a smile approv'd. 505

Meantime, to mix in more than mortal fight,  
The God of Ocean dares the God of Light.

v. 507. *The God of Ocean dares the God of Light.*] The interview between Neptune and Apollo is very judiciously in this place enlarged upon by our author. The poem now draws to a conclusion, the Trojans are to be punished for their perjury and violence: Homer accordingly with a poetical justice sums up the evidence against them, and represents the very founder of Troy as an injurious person. There have been several references to this story since the beginning of the poem, but he forbore to give it at large till near the end of it; that it might be fresh upon the memory, and shew, the Trojans deserve the punishment they are going to suffer.

Eustathius gives the reason why Apollo assists the Trojans, though he had been equally with Neptune affronted by Laomedon: this proceeded from the honours which Apollo received from the posterity of Laomedon; Troy paid him no less worship than Cilla, or Tenedos; and by these means won him over to a forgiveness: but Neptune still was slighted, and consequently continued an enemy to the whole race.

The same author gives us various opinions why Neptune is said to have built the Trojan wall, and to have been defrauded of his wages: some say that Laomedon sacrilegiously took away the treasures out of the temples of Apollo and Neptune, to carry on the fortifications; from whence it was fabled that Neptune and Apollo built the walls. Others will have it, that two of the workmen dedicated their wages to Apollo and Neptune; and that Laomedon detained them: so that he might in some sense be said to defraud the Deities themselves, by withholding what was dedicated to their temples.

What sloth has seiz'd us, when the fields around  
Ring with conflicting pow'rs, and heav'n returns  
the sound?

Shall, ignominious, we with shame retire, 510  
No deed perform'd, to our Olympian Sire?

Come, prove thy arm! for first the war to wage,  
Suits not my greatness, and superiour age:

Rash as thou art to prop the Trojan throne,

(Forgetful of my wrongs, and of thy own) 515 }

And guard the race of proud Laomedon!

The reason why Apollo is said to have kept the herds of Laomedon, is not so clear. Eustathius observes that all plagues first seize upon the four-footed creation, and are supposed to arise from this Deity: thus Apollo in the first book sends the plague into the Grecian army; the antients therefore made him to preside over cattle, that by preserving them from the plague, mankind might be safe from infectious diseases. Others tell us, that this employment is ascribed to Apollo, because he signifies the sun: now the sun cloaths the pastures with grass and herbs; so that Apollo may be said himself to feed the cattle, by supplying them with food. Upon either of these accounts Laomedon may be said to be ungrateful to that Deity, for raising no temple to his honour.

It is observable that Homer, in this story, ascribes the building of the wall to Neptune only: I should conjecture the reason might be, that Troy being a sea-port-town, the chief strength depended upon its situation, so that the sea was in a manner a wall to it: upon this account Neptune may not improbably be said to have built the wall.



36 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XXI.

Hast thou forgot, how at the monarch's pray'r,  
 We shar'd the lengthen'd labours of a year?  
 Troy walls I rais'd (for such were Jove's commands)  
 And yon' proud bulwarks grew beneath my hands:  
 Thy task it was to feed the bellowing droves 521  
 Along fair Ida's vales, and pendent groves.  
 But when the circling seasons in their train  
 Brought back the grateful day that crown'd our pain;  
 With menace stern the fraudulent king defy'd 525  
 Our latent Godhead, and the prize deny'd:  
 Mad as he was, he threaten'd servile bands,  
 And doom'd us exiles far in barb'rous lands.  
 Incens'd, we heav'nward fled with swiftest wing,  
 And destin'd vengeance on the perjur'd king. 530  
 Dost thou, for this, afford proud Ilion grace,  
 And not like us, infest the faithless race;  
 Like us, their present, future sons destroy,  
 And from its deep foundations heave their Troy?  
 Apollo thus: To combat for mankind 535  
 Ill suits the wisdom of celestial mind:  
 For what is man? Calamitous by birth,  
 They owe their life and nourishment to earth;

v. 537. *For what is man? &c.*] The poet is very happy  
 in interspersing his poem with moral sentences; in this  
 place he steals away his reader from war and horror, and  
 gives him a beautiful admonition of his own frailty. "Shall  
 " I (says Apollo) contend with thee for the sake of man?  
 " man, who is no more than a leaf of a tree, now green  
 " and flourishing, but soon withered away and gone?"  
 The son of Sirach has an expression which very much re-

Like yearly leaves, that now, with beauty crown'd,  
Smile on the sun ; now wither on the ground. 540  
To their own hands commit the frantick scene,  
Nor mix immortals in a cause so mean.

Then turns his face ; far-beaming heav'nly fires,  
And from the senior pow'r submits retires :  
Him, thus retreating, Artemis upbraids, 545  
The quiver'd hunt'ress of the Sylvan shades.

And is it thus the youthful Phœbus flies,  
And yields to Ocean's hoary Sire the prize ?  
How vain that martial pomp and dreadful show  
Of pointed arrows, and the silver bow ! 550  
Now boast no more in yon' celestial bow'r,  
Thy force can match the great earth-shaking Pow'r.

Silent, he heard the Queen of Woods upbraid :  
Not so Saturnia bore the vaunting maid ;  
But furious thus. What insolence has driv'n 555  
Thy pride to face the majesty of Heav'n ?

seembles this, Eccclus. xiv. 18. *As the green leaves upon a thick tree, some fall, and some grow, so is the generation of flesh and blood, one cometh to an end, and one is born.*

v. 544. *And from the Senior Pow'r submits retires.*] Two things hinder Homer from making Neptune and Apollo fight. First, because having already described the fight between Vulcan and Xanthus, he has nothing farther to say here, for it is the same conflict between humidity and dryness. Secondly, Apollo being the same with Destiny, and the ruin of the Trojans being concluded upon and decided, that God can no longer defer it. *Dacier.*



These in her left hand lock'd, her right unty'd  
 The bow, the quiver, and its plummy pride.  
 About her temples flies the busy bow ;  
 Now here, now there, she winds her from the  
 blow ; 570

The scatt'ring arrows rattling from the case,  
 Drop round, and idly mark the dusty place.  
 Swift from the field the baffled huntress flies,  
 And scarce retains the torrent in her eyes :  
 So, when the falcon wings her way above, 575  
 To the cleft cavern speeds the gentle dove,  
 (Not fated yet to die) there safe retreats,  
 Yet still her heart against the marble beats.

To her, Latona hastes with tender care,  
 Whom Hermes viewing, thus declines the war. 580

upon him by the antients, that as he raised the characters of his men up to Gods, so he sunk those of Gods down to men.

Yet I think it but reasonable to conclude, from the very absurdity of all this, (supposing it had no hidden meaning or allegory) that there must therefore certainly be some. Nor do I think it any inference to the contrary, that it is too obscure for us to find out : the remoteness of our times must necessarily darken yet more and more such things as were mysteries at first. Not that it is at all impossible, notwithstanding their present darkness, but they might then have been very obvious ; as it is certain, allegories ought to be disguised, but not obscured : an allegory should be like a veil over a beautiful face, so fine and transparent, as to shew the very charms it covers.

v. 580. *Whom Hermes viewing, thus declines the war.*] It is impossible that Mercury should encounter Latona ; such



How shall I face the dame, who gives delight  
 To him whose thunders blacken heaven with night?  
 Go matchless Goddess! triumph in the skies,  
 And boast my conquest, while I yield the prize.

He spoke; and pass'd: Latona, stooping low, 585  
 Collects the scatter'd shafts, and fallen bow,  
 That glitt'ring on the dust, lay here and there;  
 Dishonour'd relicks of Diana's war.

Then swift pursu'd her to her blest abode, 589  
 Where, all-confus'd, she sought the Sov'reign God;  
 Weeping she grasp'd his knees: the ambrosial vest  
 Shook with her sighs, and panted on her breast.

The Sire superiour smil'd; and bade her show  
 What heav'nly hand had caus'd his daughter's woe?  
 Abash'd, she names his own Imperial spouse; 595  
 And the pale crescent fades upon her brows.

Thus they above: while swiftly gliding down,  
 Apollo enters Ilion's sacred town:  
 The Guardian-God now trembled for her wall,  
 And fear'd the Greeks, tho' Fate forbade her fall.  
 Back to Olympus, from the war's alarms, 601  
 Return the shining bands of Gods in arms;  
 Some proud in triumph, some with rage on fire;  
 And take their thrones around th' æthereal Sire.

a fiction would be unnatural, he being a planet, and she representing the night; for the planets owe all their lustre to the shades of the night, and then only become visible to the world. *Eustathius.*

Thro' blood, thro' death, Achilles still proceeds,  
 O'er slaughter'd heroes, and o'er rolling steeds. 605  
 As when avenging flames with fury driv'n  
 On guilty towns exert the wrath of Heav'n;  
 The pale inhabitants, some fall, some fly;  
 And the red vapours purple all the sky: 610  
 So rag'd Achilles: death and dire dismay,  
 And toils, and terrours, fill'd the dreadful day.

High on a turret hoary Priam stands,  
 And marks the waste of his destructive hands;

v. 607. *As when avenging flames with fury driv'n  
 On guilty towns exert the wrath of Heav'n.]*

This passage may be explained two ways, each very remarkable. First, by taking this fire for a real fire, sent from heaven to punish a criminal city, of which we have an example in holy writ. Hence we find that Homer had a notion of this great truth, that God sometimes exerts his judgments on whole cities in this signal and terrible manner. Or if we take it in the other sense, simply as a fire thrown into a town by the enemies who assault it, and only expressed thus by the author in the same manner as Jeremy makes the city of Jerusalem say, when the Chaldeans burnt the temple, (*The Lord from above hath sent fire into my bones*, Lament. i. 13.) Yet still thus much will appear understood by Homer, that the fire which is cast into a city comes not, properly speaking, from men, but from God, who delivers it up to their fury. *Dacier.*

v. 613. *High on a turret hoary Priam, &c.]* The poet still raises the idea of the courage and strength of his hero, by making Priam in a terrour that he should enter the town after the routed troops: for if he had not surpassed

Views, from his arm, the Trojans scatter'd flight,  
 And the near hero rising on his fight ! 616  
 No step, no check, no aid ! With feeble pace,  
 And settled sorrow on his aged face,  
 Fast as he could, he fighting quits the walls ;  
 And thus, descending on the guards he calls. 620

You to whose care our city-gates belong,  
 Set wide your portals to the flying throng :  
 For lo ! he comes, with unresisted sway ;  
 He comes, and desolation marks his way ! 624  
 But when within the walls our troops take breath,  
 Lock fast the brazen bars, and shut out death.

all mortals, what could have been more desireable for an enemy, than to have let him in, and then destroyed him ?

Here again there was need of another machine to hinder him from entering the city ; for Achilles being vastly speedier than those he pursued, he must necessarily overtake some of them, and the narrow gates could not let in a body of troops, without his mingling with the hindmost. The story of Agenor is admirably contrived, and Apollo, (who was to take care that the fatal decrees should be punctually executed) interposes both to save Agenor and Troy : for Achilles might have killed Agenor, and still entered with the troops, if Apollo had not diverted him by the pursuit of that phantom. Agenor opposed himself to Achilles only because he could not do better ; for he sees himself reduced to a dilemma, either ingloriously to perish among the fugitives, or hide himself in the forest ; both which were equally unsafe : therefore he is purposely inspired with a generous resolution to try to save his countrymen, and as the reward of that service, is at last saved himself.

Thus charg'd the rev'rend monarch: wide were flung  
 The opening folds; the sounding hinges rung.  
 Phœbus rush'd forth, the flying bands to meet;  
 Struck slaughter back, and cover'd the retreat. 630  
 On heaps the Trojans croud to gain the gate,  
 And gladsome see their last escape from Fate.  
 Thither, all parch'd with thirst, a heartless train,  
 Hoary with dust, they beat the hollow plain:  
 And gasping, panting, fainting, labour on 635  
 With heavier strides, that lengthen tow'rd the town.  
 Enrag'd Achilles follows with his spear;  
 Wild with revenge, insatiable of war.

Then had the Greeks eternal praise acquir'd,  
 And Troy inglorious to her walls retir'd; 640  
 But \* he, the God who darts ætherial flame,  
 Shot down to save her, and redeem her fame,  
 To young Agenor force divine he gave,  
 (Antenor's offspring, haughty, bold, and brave)  
 In aid of him, beside the beech he sat, 645  
 And, wrapt in clouds, restrain'd the hand of Fate.  
 When now the gen'rous youth Achilles spies,  
 Thick beats his heart, the troubled motions rise,  
 (So, e'er a storm, the waters heave and roll)  
 He stops, and questions thus his mighty soul. 650

What, shall I fly this terrour of the plain?  
 Like others fly, and be like others slain?

v. 561. *What, shall I fly? &c.*] This is a very beautiful  
 soliloquy of Agenor, such a one as would naturally arise

• Apollo.



Vain hope! to shun him by the self-same road  
 Yon' line of slaughter'd Trojans lately trod.  
 No: with the common heap I scorn to fall—— 655  
 What if they pass'd me to the Trojan wall,  
 While I decline to yonder path, that leads  
 To Ida's forests and surrounding shades?  
 So may I reach, conceal'd, the cooling flood,  
 From my tir'd body wash the dirt and blood, 660  
 As soon as night her dusky veil extends,  
 Return in safety to my Trojan friends.  
 What if?——But wherefore all this vain debate?  
 Stand I to doubt, within the reach of Fate?  
 Ev'n now perhaps, e'er yet I turn the wall, 665  
 The fierce Achilles sees me, and I fall:  
 Such is his swiftness, 'tis in vain to fly,  
 And such his valour, that who stands must die.  
 Howe'er 'tis better, fighting for the state,  
 Here, and in publick view, to meet my fate. 670  
 Yet sure he too is mortal! he may feel  
 (Like all the sons of earth) the force of steel;

in the soul of a brave man, going upon a desperate enter-  
 prise: he weighs every thing in the balance of reason; he  
 sets before himself the baseness of flight, and the courage  
 of his enemy, till at last the thirst of glory preponderates  
 all other considerations. From the conclusion of this  
 speech it is evident, that the story of Achilles's being in-  
 vulnerable except in the heel, is an invention of latter  
 ages; for had he been so, there had been nothing won-  
 derful in his character. *Eustathius.*

One only foul informs that dreadful frame ;  
And Jove's sole favour gives him all his fame.

He said, and stood, collected in his might ; 675  
And all his beating bosom claim'd the fight.  
So from some deep-grown wood a panther starts,  
Rous'd from his thicket by a storm of darts :  
Untaught to fear or fly, he hears the sounds  
Of shouting hunters, and of clam'rous hounds ; 680  
Tho' struck, tho' wounded, scarce perceives the  
pain ;

And the barb'd jav'lin stings his breast in vain :  
On their whole war, untam'd the savage flies ;  
And tears his hunter, or beneath him dies.  
Not less resolv'd, Antenor's valiant heir 685  
Confronts Achilles, and awaits the war,  
Disdainful of retreat : high-held before,  
His shield (a broad circumference) he bore ;  
Then graceful as he stood, in act to throw  
The lifted jav'lin thus bespoke the foe. 690

How proud Achilles glories in his fame !  
And hopes this day to sink the Trojan name  
Beneath her ruins ! Know, that hope is vain ;  
A thousand woes, a thousand toils remain.  
Parents and children our just arms employ, 695  
And strong, and many, are the sons of Troy.  
Great as thou art, ev'n thou may'st stain with gore  
These Phrygian fields, and press a foreign shore.

He said : with matchless force the jav'lin flung  
Smote on his knee ; the hollow cuishes rung 700

Beneath the pointed steel ; but safe from harms  
 He stands impassive in th' æthereal arms.  
 Then fiercely rushing on the daring foe,  
 His lifted arm prepares the fatal blow :  
 But jealous of his fame Apollo shrouds 705  
 The God-like Trojan in a veil of clouds.  
 Safe from pursuit, and shut from mortal view,  
 Dismiss'd with fame the favour'd youth withdrew.  
 Meanwhile the God, to cover their escape,  
 Assumes Agenor's habit, voice, and shape, 710  
 Flies from the furious chief in this disguise ;  
 The furious chief still follows where he flies.

v. 709. *Meanwhile the God, to cover their escape, &c.*  
 The poet makes a double use of this fiction of Apollo's  
 deceiving Achilles in the shape of Agenor ; by these means  
 he draws him from the pursuit, and gives the Trojans  
 time to enter the city, and at the same time brings Age-  
 nor handsomely off from the combat. The moral of this  
 fable is, that Destiny would not yet suffer Troy to fall.

Eustathius fancies that the occasion of the fiction might  
 be this : Agenor fled from Achilles to the banks of Xan-  
 thus, and might there conceal himself from the pursuer  
 behind some covert that grew on the shores ; this perhaps  
 might be the whole of the story. So plain a narration  
 would have passed in the mouth of the historian, but the  
 poet dresses it in fiction, and tells us that Apollo (or Des-  
 tiny) concealed him in a cloud from the sight of his enemy.

The same author farther observes, that Achilles by an  
 unseasonable piece of vain-glory, in pursuing a single  
 enemy, gives time to a whole army to escape : he neither  
 kills Agenor, nor overtakes the Trojans.

Now o'er the fields they stretch with lengthen'd  
strides,

Now urge the course where swift Scamander glides:

The God now, distant scarce a stride before, 715

Tempts his pursuit, and wheels about the shore;

While all the flying troops their speed employ,

And pour on heaps into the walls of Troy:

No stop, no stay; no thought to ask, or tell,

Who scap'd by flight, or who by battle fell. 720

'Twas tumult all, and violence of flight;

And sudden joy confus'd, and mix'd affright:

Pale Troy against Achilles shuts her gate;

And nations breathe, deliver'd from their fate.





THE  
TWENTY-SECOND BOOK  
OF THE  
ILIAD.

VOL. V.

E

THE  
A R G U M E N T.

The Death of Hector.

*THE Trojans being safe within the walls, Hector only stays to oppose Achilles. Priam is struck at his approach, and tries to persuade his son to re-enter the town. Hecuba joins her intreaties, but in vain. Hector consults within himself what measures to take; but at the advance of Achilles, his resolution fails him, and he flies; Achilles pursues him thrice round the walls of Troy. The Gods debate concerning the fate of Hector; at length Minerva descends to the aid of Achilles. She deludes Hector in the shape of Deïphobus; he stands the combat, and is slain. Achilles drags the dead body at his chariot in the sight of Priam and Hecuba. Their lamentations, tears and despair. Their cries reach the ears of Andromache, who, ignorant of this, was retired into the inner part of the palace: she mounts up to the walls, and beholds her dead husband. She swoons at the spectacle. Her excess of grief and lamentation.*

*The thirtieth day still continues. The scene lies under the walls, and on the battlements of Troy.*

THE  
\*TWENTY-SECOND BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

**T**HUS to their bulwarks, smit with panick  
fear,  
The herded Ilians rush like driven deer;  
There safe, they wipe their briny drops away,  
And drown in bowls the labours of the day.

\* It is impossible but the whole attention of the reader must be awakened in this book: the heroes of the two armies are now to encounter; all the foregoing battles have been but so many preludes and under-actions, in order to this great event, wherein the whole fate of Greece and Troy is to be decided by the sword of Achilles and Hector.

This is the book, which of the whole Iliad appears to me the most charming. It assembles in it all that can be imagined of great and important on the one hand, and of tender and melancholy on the other: *terror* and *pity* are here wrought up in perfection; and if the reader is not sensible of both in a high degree, either he is utterly void of all taste, or the translator of all skill, in poetry.



Close to the walls, advancing o'er the fields 5  
 Beneath one roof of well-compacted shields,  
 March, bending on, the Greeks embody'd pow'rs,  
 Far-stretching in the shade of Trojan tow'rs.  
 Great Hector singly staid; chain'd down by Fate,  
 There fixt he stood before the Scæan gate; 10  
 Still his bold arms determin'd to employ,  
 The guardian still of long-defended Troy.

Apollo now to tir'd Achilles turns;  
 (The pow'r confest in all his glory burns)  
 And what (he cries) has Peleus' son in view, 15  
 With mortal speed a Godhead to pursue?  
 For not to thee to know the Gods is giv'n  
 Unskill'd to trace the latent marks of Heav'n.  
 What boots thee now, that Troy forsook the plain?  
 Vain thy past labour, and thy present vain: 20  
 Safe in their walls are now her troops bestow'd,  
 While here thy frantick rage attacks a God.

The chief incens'd—Too partial God of day!  
 To check my conquests in the middle way:  
 How few in Ilion else had refuge found? 25  
 What gasping numbers now had bit the ground?  
 Thou robb'st me of a glory justly mine,  
 Pow'rful of Godhead, and of fraud divine:  
 Mean fame, alas! for one of heav'nly strain,  
 To cheat a mortal who repines in vain. 30

Then to the city terrible and strong,  
 With high and haughty steps he tow'r'd along.

So the proud courser, victor of the prize,  
 To the near goal with double ardour flies.  
 Him, as he blazing shot across the field, 35  
 The careful eyes of Priam first beheld.  
 Not half so dreadful rises to the fight  
 Thro' the thick gloom of some tempestuous night  
 Orion's dog (the year when autumn weighs)  
 And o'er the feeble stars exerts his rays; 40  
 Terrific glory! for his burning breath  
 Taints the red air with fevers, plagues, and death.  
 So flam'd his fiery mail. Then wept the sage;  
 He strikes his rev'rend head now white with age:

v. 37. *Not half so dreadful rises, &c.*] With how much dreadful pomp is Achilles here introduced! How noble, and in what bold colours hath he drawn the blazing of his arms, the rapidity of his advance, the terrour of his appearance, the desolation round him; but above all, the certain death attending all his motions and his very looks; what a croud of terrible ideas in this one simile!

But immediately after this, follows the moving image of the two aged parents, trembling, weeping, and imploring their son: that is succeeded again by the dreadful gloomy picture of Hector, all on fire, obstinately bent on death, and expecting Achilles; admirably painted in the simile of the snake rolled up in his den, and collecting his poisons: and indeed, through the whole book, this wonderful contrast, and opposition of the *moving* and of the *terrible*, is perpetually kept up, each heightening the other; I cannot find words to express how so great beauties affect me.

54 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XXII.

He lifts his wither'd arms ; obtests the skies ; 45  
 He calls his much-lov'd son with feeble cries ;  
 The son, resolv'd Achilles' force to dare,  
 Full at the Scæan gate expects the war ;  
 While the sad father on the rampart stands,  
 And thus adjures him with extended hands. 50

Ah stay not, stay not ! guardless and alone ;  
 Hector ! my lov'd, my dearest bravest son !  
 Methinks already I behold thee slain,  
 And stretch'd beneath that fury of the plain.  
 Implacable Achilles ! might'st thou be 55  
 To all the Gods no dearer than to me !

v. 51. *The speech of Priam to Hector.*] The poet has entertained us all along with various scenes of slaughter and horror : he now changes to the pathetick, and fills the mind of the reader with tender sorrows. Eustathius observes that Priam preludes to his words by actions expressive of misery : the unhappy orator introduces his speech to Hector with groans and tears, and rending his hoary hair. The father and the king plead with Hector to preserve his life and his country. He represents his own age, and the loss of many of his children, and adds, that if Hector falls, he should then be inconsolable, and the empire of Troy at an end.

It is a piece of great judgment in Homer, to make the fall of Troy to depend upon the death of Hector : the poet does not openly tell us that Troy was taken by the Greeks ; but that the reader might not be unacquainted with what happened after the period of his poem, he gives us to understand in his speech, that the city was taken, and that Priam, his wives, his sons, and daughters were either killed or made slaves,

Book XXII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 55

Thee, vultures wild should scatter round the shore,  
 And bloody dogs grow fiercer from thy gore.  
 How many valiant sons I late enjoy'd,  
 Valiant in vain! by thy curst arm destroy'd: 60  
 Or, worse than slaughter'd, sold in distant isles  
 To shameful bondage and unworthy toils.  
 Two, while I speak, my eyes in vain explore,  
 Two from one mother sprung, my Polydore,  
 And lov'd Lycaon; now perhaps no more! 65  
 Oh! if in yonder hostile camp they live,  
 What heaps of gold, what treasures would I give?  
 (Their grandfire's wealth, by right of birth their own,  
 Consign'd his daughter with Lelegia's throne)  
 But if (which Heav'n forbid) already lost, 70  
 All pale they wander on the Stygian coast;  
 What sorrows then must their sad mother know,  
 What anguish I? unutterable woe!  
 Yet less that anguish, less to her, to me,  
 Less to all Troy, if not depriv'd of thee. 75  
 Yet shun Achilles! enter yet the wall;  
 And spare thyself, thy father, spare us all!

v. 76. *Enter yet the wall; And spare, &c.*] The argument that Priam uses (says Eustathius) to induce Hector to secure himself in Troy is remarkable: he draws it not from Hector's fears, nor does he tell him that he is to save his own life: but he insists upon stronger motives: he tells him he may preserve his fellow-citizens, his country, and his father; and farther persuades him not to add glory to his mortal enemy by his fall.



Save thy dear life; or if a soul so brave  
 Neglect that thought, thy dearer glory save.  
 Pity, while yet I live, these silver hairs; 80  
 While yet thy father feels the woes he bears,  
 Yet curst with sense! a wretch whom in his rage  
 (All trembling on the verge of helpless age)  
 Great Jove has plac'd, sad spectacle of pain!  
 The bitter dregs of fortune's cup to drain: 85  
 To fill with scenes of death his closing eyes,  
 And number all his days by miseries!  
 My heroes slain, my bridal bed o'erturn'd,  
 My daughters ravish'd, and my city burn'd,  
 My bleeding infants dash'd against the floor; 90  
 These I have yet to see, perhaps yet more!  
 Perhaps ev'n I, reserv'd by angry Fate  
 The last sad relick of my ruin'd state,  
 (Dire pomp of sov'reign wretchedness!) must fall,  
 And stain the pavement of my regal hall; 95  
 Where famish'd dogs, late guardians of my door,  
 Shall lick their mangled master's spatter'd gore.  
 Yet for my sons I thank ye Gods! 'twas well;  
 Well have they perish'd, for in fight they fell.

v. 90. *My bleeding infants dash'd against the floor.*] Cruelties which the Barbarians usually exercised in the sacking of towns. Thus Isaiah foretels to Babylon that her children shall be dashed in pieces before her eyes by the Medes. *Infantes eorum allidentur in oculis eorum*, xii. 16. And David says to the same city, *happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones*. Psal. cxxxvii. 9. And in the prophet Hosea, xiii. 16. *Their infants shall be dashed in pieces*. Dacier.

Who dies in youth, and vigour, dies the best, 100  
 Struck thro' with wounds, all honest on the breast.  
 But when the Fates, in fulness of their rage,  
 Spurn the hoar head of unresisting age,  
 In dust the rev'rend lineaments deform,  
 And pour to dogs the life-blood scarcely warm; 105  
 This, this is misery! the last, the worst,  
 That man can feel; man, fated to be curst!

He said, and acting what no words could say,  
 Rent from his head the silver locks away.  
 With him the mournful mother bears a part; 110  
 Yet all their sorrows turn not Hector's heart:  
 The zone unbrac'd, her bosom she display'd;  
 And thus, fast-falling the salt tears, she said.

Have mercy on me, O my son! revere  
 The words of age; attend a parent's pray'r! 115

v. 102. *But when the Fates, &c.*] Nothing can be more moving than the image which Homer gives here, in comparing the different effects produced by the view of a young man, and that of an old one, both bleeding, and extended on the dust. The old man, it is certain, touches us most, and several reasons may be given for it; the principal is, that the young man defended himself, and his death is glorious; whereas an old man has no defence but his weakness, prayers, and tears. They must be very insensible of what is dreadful, and have no taste in poetry, who omit this passage in a translation, and substitute things of a trivial and insipid nature. *Dacier.*

v. 114. *The speech of Hecuba.*] The speech of Hecuba opens with as much tenderness as that of Priam: the cir-

If ever thee in these fond arms I prest,  
 Or still'd thy infant clamours at this breast;  
 Ah do not thus our helpless years forego,  
 But by our walls secur'd, repel the foe.  
 Against his rage if singly thou proceed, 120  
 Should'st thou (but Heav'n avert it!) should'st thou  
 bleed,

Nor must thy corpse lie honour'd on the bier,  
 Nor spouse, nor mother, grace thee with a tear;  
 Far from our pious rites, those dear remains  
 Must feast the vultures on the naked plains. 125

cumstance in particular of her shewing that breast to her son which had sustained his infancy, is highly moving: it is a silent kind of oratory, and prepares the heart to listen, by prepossessing the eye in favour of the speaker.

Eustathius takes notice of the difference between the speeches of Priam and Hecuba: Priam dissuades him from the combat, by enumerating not only the loss of his own family, but of his whole country: Hecuba dwells entirely upon his single death: this is a great beauty in the poet, to make Priam a father to his whole country; but to describe the fondness of the mother as prevailing over all other considerations, and to mention that only which chiefly affects her.

This puts me in mind of a judicious stroke in Milton, with regard to the several characters of Adam and Eve. When the angel is driving them both out of Paradise, Adam grieves that he must leave a place where he had conversed with God and his angels; but Eve laments that we shall never more behold the flowers of Eden. Here Adam mourns like a man, and Eve like a woman.

So they, while down their cheeks the torrents  
roll;

But fix'd remains the purpose of his soul:  
Resolv'd he stands, and with a fiery glance  
Expects the hero's terrible advance.

So roll'd up in his den the swelling snake 130  
Beholds the traveller approach the brake;  
When fed with noxious herbs his turgid veins  
Have gather'd half the poisons of the plains;  
He burns, he stiffens with collected ire,  
And his red eye-balls glare with living fire. 135  
Beneath a turret on his shield reclin'd,  
He stood, and question'd thus his mighty mind.

Where lies my way? To enter in the wall?  
Honour and shame th' ungen'rous thought recall:

v. 138. *The soliloquy of Hector.*] There is much greatness in the sentiments of this whole soliloquy. Hector prefers death to an ignominious life: he knows how to die with glory, but not how to live with dishonour. The reproach of Polydamas affects him; the scandals of the meanest people have an influence on his thoughts.

It is remarkable that he does not say, he fears the insults of the brave Trojans, but of the most worthless only. Men of merit are always the most candid; but others are ever for bringing all men to a level with themselves. They cannot bear that any one should be so bold as to excel, and are ready to pull him down to them, upon the least miscarriage. This sentiment is perfectly fine, and agreeable to the way of thinking, natural to a great and sensible mind.



Shall proud Polydamas before the gate 140  
 Proclaim, his counsels are obey'd too late,  
 Which timely follow'd but the former night,  
 What numbers had been fav'd by Hector's flight?  
 That wise advice rejected with disdain,  
 I feel my folly in my people slain. 145  
 Methinks my suff'ring country's voice I hear,  
 But most, her worthless sons insult my ear,

There is a very beautiful break in the middle of this speech. Hector's mind fluctuates every way, he is calling a council in his own breast, and consulting what method to pursue: he doubts if he should not propose terms of peace to Achilles, and grants him very large concessions; but of a sudden he checks himself, and leaves the sentence unfinished. The paragraph runs thus; "If, says Hector, "I should offer him the largest conditions, give all that "Troy contains"—There he stops, and immediately subjoins, "But why do I delude myself, &c."

It is evident from this speech that the power of making peace was in Hector's hands: for unless Priam had transferred it to him, he could not have made these propositions. So that it was Hector who broke the treaty in the third book (where the very same conditions were proposed by Agamemnon.) It is Hector therefore that is guilty, he is blameable in continuing the war, and involving the Greeks and Trojans in blood. This conduct in Homer was necessary; he observes poetical justice, and shews that Hector is a criminal, before he brings him to death. *Eustathius.*

v. 140. *Shall proud Polydamas, &c.*] Hector alludes to the counsel given him by Polydamas in the eighteenth book, which he then neglected to follow: it was, to withdraw to the city, and fortify themselves there, before Achilles returned to the battle.

On my rash courage charge the chance of war,  
 And blame those virtues which they cannot share.  
 No — if I e'er return, return I must 150  
 Glorious, my country's terror laid in dust:  
 Or if I perish, let her see me fall  
 In field at least, and fighting for her wall.  
 And yet suppose these measures I forego,  
 Approach unarm'd, and parley with the foe, 155  
 The warrior-shield, the helm, and lance lay down,  
 And treat on terms of peace to save the town:  
 The wife with-held, the treasure ill-detain'd,  
 (Cause of the war, and grievance of the land)  
 With honourable justice to restore; 160  
 And add half Ilion's yet remaining store,  
 Which Troy shall, sworn, produce; that injur'd  
 Greece

May share our wealth, and leave our walls in peace.  
 But why this thought? Unarm'd if I should go,  
 What hope of mercy from this vengeful foe, 165 }  
 But woman-like to fall, and fall without a blow? }  
 We greet not here, as man conversing man,  
 Met at an oak, or journeying o'er a plain;

v. 167. *We greet not here, as man conversing man,  
 Met at an oak, or journeying o'er a plain, &c.]*

The words literally are these, "*There is no talking with  
 Achilles, and δὲὺς ἔδ' ἀνδ' ὠρέγας, from an oak or from a rock,*  
 [or about an oak or a rock] *as a young man and a maiden*  
*talk together.* It is thought an obscure passage, though I  
 confess I am either too fond of my own explication in the

No season now for calm familiar talk,  
Like youths and maidens in an ev'ning walk: 170

above cited verses, or they make it a very clear one. "There is no conversing with this implacable enemy in the rage of battle; as when fauntring people talk at leisure to one another on the road, or when young men and women meet in a field." I think the exposition of Eustathius more far-fetched, though it be ingenious; and therefore I must do him the justice not to suppress it. It was a common practice, says he, with the heathens, to expose such children as they either could not, or would not educate: the places where they deposited them were usually in the cavities of *rocks*, or the hollow of *oaks*: these children being frequently found and preserved by strangers, were said to be the offspring of those oaks or rocks where they were found. This gave occasion to the poets to feign that men were born of *oaks*, and there was a famous fable too of Deucalion and Pyrrha's repairing mankind by casting *stones* behind them: it grew at last into a proverb, to signify idle tales; so that in the present passage it imports, that Achilles *will not listen to such idle tales as may pass with silly maids and fond lovers*. For fables and stories (and particularly such stories as the preservation, strange fortune, and adventures of exposed children) are the usual conversation of young men and maidens. Eustathius's explanation may be corroborated by a parallel place in the Odyssey, where the poet says,

Οὐ γὰρ ἀπὸ δρυὶς ἔσσι παλαιφάτη, ἢ δ' ἀπὸ πέτρης.

The meaning of which passage is plainly this, *Tell me of what race you are, for undoubtedly you had a father and mother; you are not, according to the old story, descended from an oak or a rock*. Where the word παλαιφάτη shews that this was become an antient proverb even in Homer's days.

War is our business, but to whom is giv'n  
To die, or triumph, that, determine Heav'n!

Thus pond'ring, like a God the Greek drew nigh,  
His dreadful plumage nodded from on high;  
The Pelian jav'lin in his better hand, 175  
Shot trembling rays that glitter'd o'er the land;  
And on his breast the beamy splendors shone  
Like Jove's own light'ning or the rising sun.  
As Hector sees, unusual terrors rise, 179  
Struck by some God, he fears, recedes, and flies.  
He leaves the gates, he leaves the walls behind;  
Achilles follows like the winged wind.

v. 180. *Struck by some God, he fears, recedes, and flies.*  
I doubt not most readers are shocked at the flight of Hector: it is indeed a high exaltation of Achilles (which was the poet's chief hero) that so brave a man as Hector durst not stand him. While Achilles was at a distance, he had fortified his heart with noble resolutions, but at his approach they all vanish, and he flies. This (as exceptionable as some may think it) may yet be allowed to be a true portrait of human nature; for distance, as it lessens all objects, so it does our fears; but where inevitable danger approaches, the stoutest hearts will feel some apprehensions at certain fate. It was the saying of one of the bravest men in this age, to one who told him he feared nothing, *Shew me but a certain danger, and I shall be as much afraid as any of you.* I do not absolutely pretend to justify this passage in every point, but only to have thus much granted me, that Hector was in this desperate circumstance.

*First,* It will not be found in the whole Iliad, that Hector ever thought himself a match for Achilles. Homer (to



'Thus at the panting dove a falcon flies,  
(The swiftest racer of the liquid skies)

keep this in our minds) had just now made Priam tell him, as a thing known (for certainly Priam would not insult him at that time) that there was no comparison between his own strength, and that of his antagonist :

— — — ἐπειὶ πολὺ φέρερός ἐστιν.

*Secondly*, We may observe with Dacier, the degrees by which Homer prepares this incident. In the eighteenth book the mere sight and voice of Achilles unarmed, has terrified and put the whole Trojan army into disorder. In the nineteenth the very sound of the celestial arms given him by Vulcan, has affrighted his own myrmidons as they stand about him. In the twentieth, he has been upon the point of killing Æneas, and Hector himself was not saved from him but by Apollo's interposing. In that and the following book, he makes an incredible slaughter of all that oppose him, he overtakes most of those that fly from him, and Priam himself opens the gates of Troy to receive the rest.

*Thirdly*, Hector stays, not that he hopes to overcome Achilles, but because shame and the dread of reproach forbid him to re-enter the city; a shame (says Eustathius) which was a fault that betrayed him out of his life, and ruined his country. Nay, Homer adds farther, that he only staid by the immediate will of Heaven, intoxicated and irresistibly bound down by Fate.

Ἐδοξα δ' αὐτῷ μῆναι ὅλον μοῖρ' ἐπέδραον.

*Fourthly*, He had just been reflecting on the injustice of the war he maintained; his spirits are depressed by Heaven, he expects certain death, he perceives himself abandoned by the Gods, (as he directly says in verse 300, &c. of the Greek, and 384 of the translation) so that he might say to Achilles what Turnus does to Æneas,

"Dii me terrent, & Jupiter hostis."

Just when he holds, or thinks he holds his prey,  
Obliquely wheeling thro' th' aerial way ; 186

This indeed is the strongest reason that can be offered for the flight of Hector. He flies not from Achilles as a mortal hero, but from one whom he sees clad in impenetrable armour, seconded by Minerva, and one who had put to flight the inferior Gods themselves. This is not cowardice, according to the constant principles of Homer, who thought it no part of a hero's character to be impious, or to fancy himself independent on the Supreme Being.

Indeed it had been a grievous fault, had our author suffered the courage of Hector entirely to forsake him even in this extremity : a brave man's soul is still capable of rousing itself, and acting honourably in the last struggles. Accordingly Hector, though delivered over to his destiny, abandoned by the Gods, and certain of death, yet stops and attacks Achilles ; when he loses his spear, he draws his sword : it was impossible he should conquer, it was only in his power to fall gloriously ; this he did, and it was all that man could do.

If the reader, after all, cannot bring himself to like this passage, for his own particular ; yet to induce him to suspend his absolute censure, he may consider that Virgil has an uncommon esteem for it, as he has testified in transferring it almost entirely to the death of Turnus ; where there was no necessity of making use of the like incidents ; but doubtless he was touched with this episode, as with one of those which interest us most of the whole Iliad, by a spectacle at once so terrible, and so deplorable. I must also add the suffrage of Aristotle, who was so far from looking upon this passage as ridiculous or blameable, that he esteemed it marvellous and admirable. " The *wonderful*, says he, ought to have place in tragedy, but still more in epick poetry, which proceeds

With open beak and shrilling cries he springs,  
 And aims his claws, and shoots upon his wings :  
 No less fore-right the rapid chace they held,  
 One urg'd by fury, one by fear impell'd ; 190  
 Now circling round the walls their course maintain,  
 Where the high watch-tow'r overlooks the plain ;  
 Now where the fig-trees spread their umbrage broad,  
 (A wider compass) smoke along the road.

“ in this point even to the unreasonable : for as in epic  
 “ poems one sees not the persons acting, so whatever  
 “ passes the bounds of reason is proper to produce the ad-  
 “ mirable and the marvellous. For example, what Ho-  
 “ mer says of Hector pursued by Achilles, would appear  
 “ ridiculous on the stage ; for the spectators could not  
 “ forbear laughing to see on one side the Greeks stand-  
 “ ing without any motion, and on the other Achilles pur-  
 “ suing Hector, and making signs to the troops not to  
 “ dart at him. But all this does not appear when we  
 “ read the poem : for what is wonderful is always agree-  
 “ able, and as a proof of it, we find that they who  
 “ relate any thing, usually add something to the truth,  
 “ that it may the better please those who hear it.”

The same great critick vindicates this passage in the  
 chapter following. “ A poet, says he, is inexcusable, if  
 “ he introduces such things as are impossible according to  
 “ the rules of poetry : but this ceases to be a fault, if by  
 “ those means he attains to the end proposed ; for he has  
 “ then brought about what he intended : for example, if  
 “ he renders by it any part of his poem more astonishing  
 “ or admirable. Such is the place of the Iliad, where  
 “ Achilles pursues Hector.” *Arist. Poet. chap. xxv, xxvi.*

Next by Scamander's double source they bound, 195  
 Where two fam'd fountains burst the parted ground ;  
 This hot thro' scorching clefts is seen to rise,  
 With exhalations steaming to the skies ;  
 That the green banks in summer's heat o'erflows,  
 Like crystal clear, and cold as winter snows. 200  
 Each gushing fount a marble cistern fills,  
 Whose polish'd bed receives the falling rills ;

v. 196. *Where two fam'd fountains.*] Strabo blames Homer for saying that one of the sources of Scamander was a warm fountain ; whereas (says he) there is but one spring, and that cold ; neither is this in the place where Homer fixes it, but in the mountain. It is observed by Eustathius, that though this was not true in Strabo's time, yet it might in Homer's, greater changes having happened in less time than that which passed between those two authors. Sandys, who was both a geographer and critic of great accuracy, as well as a traveller of great veracity, affirms as an eye-witness, that there are yet some hot-water springs in that part of the country, opposite to Tenedos. I cannot but think that gentleman must have been particularly diligent and curious in his enquiries into the remains of a place so celebrated in poetry ; as he was not only perhaps the most learned, but one of the best poets of his time : I am glad of this occasion to do his memory so much justice as to say, the English versification owes much of its improvement to his translations, and especially that admirable one of Job. What chiefly pleases me in this place, is to see the exact landscape of old Troy ; we have a clear idea of the town itself, and of the roads and country about it ; the river, the fig-trees, and every part is set before our eyes.



Where Trojan dames (e'er yet alarm'd by Greece)  
 Wash'd their fair garments in the days of peace.  
 By these they pass'd, one chafing, one in flight, 205  
 (The mighty fled, pursu'd by stronger might)  
 Swift was the course ; no vulgar prize they play,  
 No vulgar victim must reward the day,  
 (Such as in races crown the speedy strife)  
 The prize contended was great Hector's life. 210  
 As when some hero's fun'rals are decreed  
 In grateful honour of the mighty dead ;  
 Where high rewards the vigorous youth inflame,  
 (Some golden tripod, or some lovely dame)  
 The panting courfers swiftly turn the goal, 215  
 And with them turns the rais'd spectator's soul.  
 Thus three times round the Trojan wall they fly ;  
 The gazing Gods lean forward from the sky:

v. 213. *The gazing Gods lean forward from the sky.*] We have here an instance of the great judgment of Homer. The death of Hector being the chief action of the poem ; he assembles the Gods, and calls a council in heaven concerning it : it is for the same reason that he represents Jupiter with the greatest solemnity weighing in his scales the fates of the two heroes : I have before observed at large upon the last circumstance in a preceding note, so that there is no occasion to repeat it.

I wonder that none of the commentators have taken notice of this beauty ; in my opinion it is a very necessary observation, and shews the art and judgment of the poet, that he has made the greatest and finishing action of the poem of such importance that it engages the Gods in debates.

To whom, while eager on the chace they look,  
The Sire of mortals and immortals spoke. 220

Unworthy fight! the man, belov'd of Heav'n,  
Behold, inglorious round yon' city driv'n!  
My heart partakes the gen'rous Hector's pain;  
Hector, whose zeal whole hecatombs has slain,  
Whose grateful fumes the Gods receiv'd with joy,  
From Ida's summits, and the tow'rs of Troy: 226  
Now see him flying! to his fears resign'd,  
And Fate, and fierce Achilles, close behind.  
Consult, ye Pow'rs! ('tis worthy your debate)  
Whether to snatch him from impending Fate, 230  
Or let him bear, by stern Pelides slain,  
(Good as he is) the lot impos'd on man?

Then Pallas thus: Shall he whose vengeance  
forms  
The forky bolt, and blackens heav'n with storms,

v. 226. *From Ida's summits—*] It was the custom of the Pagans to sacrifice to the Gods upon the hills and mountains, in scripture language upon the *high places*, for they were persuaded that the Gods in a particular manner inhabited such eminences: wherefore God ordered his people to destroy all those high places, which the nations had profaned by their idolatry. *You shall utterly destroy all the places wherein the nations which you shall possess served their Gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree.* Deut. xii. 2. It is for this reason that so many kings are reproached in Scripture for not *taking away the high places.* Dacier.

Shall he prolong one Trojan's forfeit breath! 235

A man, a mortal, pre-ordain'd to death!

And will no murmurs fill the courts above?

No Gods indignant blame their partial Jove?

Go then (return'd the Sire) without delay,  
Exert thy will: I give the Fates their way. 240

Swift at the mandate pleas'd Tritonia flies,

And stoops impetuous from the cleaving skies.

As thro' the forest, o'er the vale and lawn  
The well-breath'd beagle drives the flying fawn;

In vain he tries the covert of the brakes, 245

Or deep beneath the trembling thicket shakes;

Sure of the vapour in the tainted dews,

The certain hound his various maze pursues.

Thus step by step, where'er the Trojan wheel'd,

There swift Achilles compass'd round the field. 250

v. 249. *Thus step by step, &c.*] There is some difficulty in this passage, and it seems strange that Achilles could not overtake Hector, whom he excelled so much in swiftness, especially when the poet describes him as running in a narrower circle than Hector. Eustathius gives us many solutions from the ancients; Homer has already told us that they run for the life of Hector; and consequently Hector would exert his utmost speed, whereas Achilles might only endeavour to keep him from entering the city: besides, Achilles could not directly pursue him, because he frequently made efforts to shelter himself under the wall, and he being obliged to turn him from it, he might be forced to take more steps than Hector. But the poet, to take away all grounds of an objection, tells us afterwards, that Apollo gave him a supernatural swiftness.

Book XXII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 71

Off' as to reach the Dardan gates he bends,  
And hopes th' assistance of his pitying friends,  
(Whose show'ring arrows, as he cours'd below,  
From the high turrets might oppress the foe)

So oft' Achilles turns him to the plain : 255

He eyes the city, but he eyes in vain.

As men in slumbers seem with speedy pace

One to pursue, and one to lead the chace,

Their sinking limbs the fancy'd course forsake,

Nor this can fly, nor that can overtake : 260

No less the lab'ring heroes pant and strain ;

While that but flies, and this pursues in vain.

What God, O muse ! assisted Hector's force,

With Fate itself so long to hold the course?

Phœbus it was ; who in his latest hour, 265

Endu'd his knees with strength, his nerves with  
pow'r :

v. 257. *As men in slumbers.*] This beautiful comparison has been condemned by some of the antients, even so far as to judge it unworthy of having a place in the Iliad : they say the diction is mean, and the similitude itself absurd, because it compares the swiftness of the heroes to men asleep, who are in a state of rest and inactivity. But there cannot be a more groundless criticism : the poet is so far from drawing his comparison from the repose of men asleep, that he alludes only to their dreams : it is a race in fancy that he describes ; and surely the imagination is nimble enough to illustrate the greatest degree of swiftness : besides the verses themselves run with the utmost rapidity, and imitate the swiftness they describe. *Esstathi*



And great Achilles, lest some Greek's advance  
Should snatch the glory from his lifted lance,  
Sign'd to the troops to yield his foe the way,  
And leave untouch'd the honours of the day. 270

What sufficiently proves these verses to be genuine, is that Virgil has imitated them, *Æn.* xii.

“Ac veluti in somnis”——

v. 269. *Sign'd to the troops, &c.*] The difference which Homer here makes between Hector and Achilles deserves to be taken notice of; Hector is running away towards the walls, to the end that the Trojans who are upon them may overwhelm Achilles with their darts; and Achilles in turning Hector towards the plain, makes a sign to his troops not to attack him. This shews the great courage of Achilles. Yet this action which appears so generous has been very much condemned by the antients; Plutarch in the life of Pompey gives us to understand, that it was looked upon as the action of a fool too greedy of glory. Indeed this is not a single combat of Achilles against Hector, (for in that case Achilles would have done very ill not to hinder his troops from assaulting him) this was a rencounter in a battle, and so Achilles might, and ought to take all advantage to rid himself, the readiest and the surest way, of an enemy whose death would procure an entire victory to his party. Wherefore does he leave this victory to chance? Why expose himself to the hazard of losing it? Why does he prefer his private glory to the publick weal, and the safety of all the Greeks, which he puts to the venture by delaying to conquer, and endangering his own person? I grant it is a fault, but it must be owned to be the fault of a hero. *Eustathius. Dacier,*

Jove lifts the golden balances, that show  
 The fates of mortal men, and things below :  
 Here each contending hero's lot he tries,  
 And weighs, with equal hand, their destinies.  
 Low sinks the scale surcharg'd with Hector's fate ;  
 Heavy with death it sinks, and hell receives the  
 weight. 276

Then Phœbus left him. Fierce Minerva flies  
 To stern Pelides, and triumphing, cries :  
 Oh lov'd of Jove ! this day our labours cease,  
 And conquest blazes with full beams on Greece. 280  
 Great Hector falls ; that Hector fam'd so far,  
 Drunk with renown, insatiable of war,

v. 277. *Then Phœbus left him—*] This is a very beautiful and poetical manner of describing a plain circumstance : the hour of Hector's death was now come, and the poet expresses it by saying that Apollo or Destiny forsakes him : that is, the Fates no longer protect him. *Eustathius.*

v. 277. — *Fierce Minerva flies To stern Pelides, &c.*] The poet may seem to diminish the glory of Achilles, by ascribing the victory over Hector to the assistance of Pallas ; whereas in truth he fell by the hand only of Achilles ; but poetry loves to raise every thing into a wonder ; it steps out of the common road of narration, and aims to surprise ; and the poet would farther insinuate that it is a greater glory to Achilles to be beloved by the Gods, than to be only excellent in valour : for many men may have valour, but few the favour of Heaven. *Eustathius.*

Falls by thy hand, and mine! nor force, nor flight,  
Shall more avail him, nor his God of Light.

See, where in vain he supplicates above, 285  
Roll'd at the feet of unrelenting Jove!

Rest here: myself will lead the Trojan on,  
And urge to meet the fate he cannot shun.

Her voice divine the chief with joyful mind  
Obey'd; and rested, on his lance reclin'd. 290

While like Deïphobus the martial Dame  
(Her face, her gesture, and her arms the same)  
In show an aid, by hapless Hector's side  
Approach'd, and greets him thus with voice bely'd.

Too long, O Hector, have I born the fight  
Of this distress, and sorrow'd in thy flight: 296

It fits us now a noble stand to make,  
And here, as brothers, equal fates partake.

Then he. O prince! ally'd in blood and fame,  
Dearer than all that own a brother's name; 300

v. 290. *Obey'd; and rested.*] The whole passage where Pallas deceives Hector is evidently an allegory: Achilles perceiving that he cannot overtake Hector, pretends to be quite spent and wearied in the pursuit; the stratagem takes effect, and recalls his enemy: this the poet expresses by saying that Pallas, or Wisdom, came to assist Achilles. Hector observing his enemy stay to rest, concludes that he is quite fatigued, and immediately takes courage and advances upon him; he thinks he has him at an advantage, but at last finds himself deceived: thus making a wrong judgment, he is betrayed into his death; so that his own *false judgment* is the *treacherous* Pallas that deceives him. *Eustathius.*

Of all that Hecuba to Priam bore,  
Long try'd, long lov'd; much lov'd, but honour'd  
more!

Since you of all our num'rous race, alone  
Defend my life, regardless of your own. 304

Again the Goddess. Much my father's pray'r,  
And much my mother's, prest me to forbear:  
My friends embrac'd my knees, adjur'd my stay,  
But stronger love impell'd, and I obey.

Come then, the glorious conflict let us try,  
Let the steel sparkle, and the jav'lin fly; 310  
Or let us stretch Achilles on the field,  
Or to his arm our bloody trophies yield.

Fraudful she said; then swiftly march'd before;  
The Dardan hero shuns his foe no more.

Sternly they met. The silence Hector broke; 315  
His dreadful plumage nodded as he spoke.

Enough, O son of Peleus! Troy has view'd  
Her walls thrice circled, and her chief pursu'd.

v. 317. *The speeches of Hector and of Achilles.*] There is an opposition between these speeches excellently adapted to the characters of both the heroes. That of Hector is full of courage, but mixed with humanity; that of Achilles, of resentment and arrogance. We see the great Hector disposing of his own remains: and that thirst of glory which has made him live with honour, now bids him provide, as Eustathius observes, that what once was Hector may not be dishonoured. Thus we see a sedate, calm courage, with a contempt of death, in the speech of Hec-



But now some God within me bids me try  
 Thine, or my fate : I kill thee, or I die. 320  
 Yet on the verge of battle let us stay,  
 And for a moment's space suspend the day ;  
 Let Heav'n's high pow'rs be call'd to arbitrate  
 The just conditions of this stern debate.  
 (Eternal witnesses of all below, 325  
 And faithful guardians of the treasur'd vow !)  
 To them I swear ; if victor in the strife,  
 Jove by these hands shall shed thy noble life,  
 No vile dishonour shall thy corpse pursue ;  
 Stript of its arms alone (the conq'ror's due) 330  
 The rest to Greece uninjur'd I'll restore :  
 Now plight thy mutual oath, I ask no more.

tor : but in that of Achilles there is a *fiertè*, and an insolent air of superiority. His magnanimity makes him scorn to steal a victory : he bids him prepare to defend himself with all his forces : and that valour and resentment, which made him desirous that he might revenge himself upon Hector with his own hand, and forbade the Greeks to interpose, now directs him not to take any advantage over a brave enemy. I think both their characters are admirably sustained, and though Achilles be drawn with a great violence of features, yet the picture is undoubtedly like him ; and it had been the utmost absurdity to have softened one line upon this occasion, when the soul of Achilles was all on fire to revenge the death of his friend Patroclus. I must desire the reader to carry this observation in his memory, and particularly in that place, where Achilles says he could eat the very flesh of Hector ; though I have a little softened it in the translation, v. 437.

Talk not of oaths (the dreadful chief replies,  
While anger flash'd from his disdainful eyes)  
Detested as thou art, and ought to be, 335

Nor oath nor pact Achilles plights with thee :  
Such pacts, as lambs and rabid wolves combine,  
Such leagues as men and furious lions join,  
To such I call the Gods! one constant state  
Of lasting rancour and eternal hate ; 340

No thought but rage, and never-ceasing strife,  
'Till death extinguish rage, and thought, and life.  
Rouse then thy forces this important hour,  
Collect thy soul, and call forth all thy pow'r.  
No farther subterfuge, no farther chance ; 345

'Tis Pallas, Pallas gives thee to my lance.  
Each Grecian ghost by thee depriv'd of breath,  
Now hovers round, and calls thee to thy death.

He spoke, and lanch'd his jav'lin at the foe ;  
But Hector shunn'd the meditated blow : 350  
He stoop'd, while o'er his head the flying spear  
Sung innocent, and spent its force in air.

Minerva watch'd it falling on the land,  
Then drew, and gave to great Achilles' hand,  
Unseen of Hector, who, elate with joy, 355  
Now shakes his lance, and braves the dread of Troy.

The life you boasted to that jav'lin giv'n,  
Prince! you have mist. My fate depends on Heav'n.  
To thee, presumptuous as thou art, unknown  
Or what must prove my fortune, or thy own. 360

Boasting is but an art, our fears to blind,  
 And with false terrours sink another's mind.  
 But know, whatever fate I am to try,  
 By no dishonest wound shall Hector die;  
 I shall not fall a fugitive at least, 365  
 My soul shall bravely issue from my breast.  
 But first, try thou my arm; and may this dart  
 End all my country's woes, deep buried in thy  
 heart!

The weapon flew, its course unerring held,  
 Unerring, but the heav'nly shield repell'd 370  
 The mortal dart; resulting with a bound  
 From off the ringing orb, it struck the ground.  
 Hector beheld his jav'lin fall in vain,  
 Nor other lance, nor other hope remain;  
 He calls Deïphobus, demands a spear, 375  
 In vain, for no Deïphobus was there.  
 All comfortless he stands: then, with a sigh,  
 'Tis so—Heav'n wills it, and my hour is nigh!  
 I deem'd Deïphobus had heard my call,  
 But he secure lies guarded in the wall. 380  
 A God deceiv'd me: Pallas, 'twas thy deed,  
 Death, and black Fate approach! 'tis I must bleed.  
 No refuge now, no succour from above,  
 Great Jove deserts me, and the son of Jove,  
 Propitious once, and kind! then welcome Fate!  
 'Tis true I perish, yet I perish great: 386  
 Yet in a mighty deed I shall expire,  
 Let future ages hear it, and admire!

Fierce, at the word, his weighty sword he drew,  
 And, all collected, on Achilles flew. 390  
 So Jove's bold bird, high balanc'd in the air,  
 Stoops from the clouds to trufs the quiv'ring hare.  
 Nor less Achilles his fierce soul prepares;  
 Before his breast the flaming shield he bears,  
 Refulgent orb! above his fourfold cone 395  
 The gilded horse-hair sparkled in the sun,  
 Nodding at ev'ry step: (Vulcanian frame!)  
 And as he mov'd, his figure seem'd on flame.  
 As radiant Hesper shines with keener light,  
 Far-beaming o'er the silver host of night, 400  
 When all the starry train emblaze the sphere:  
 So shone the point of great Achilles' spear.  
 In his right-hand he waves the weapon round,  
 Eyes the whole man, and meditates the wound;  
 But the rich mail Patroclus lately wore, 405  
 Securely cas'd the warriour's body o'er,  
 One place at length he spies, to let in Fate,  
 Where 'twixt the neck and throat the jointed plate

v. 391. *So Jove's bold bird, &c.*] The poet takes up  
 some time in describing the two great heroes before they  
 close in fight: the verses are pompous and magnificent,  
 and he illustrates his description with two beautiful simi-  
 les: he makes a double use of this conduct, which not  
 only raises our imagination to attend to so momentous an  
 action, but by lengthening his narration keeps the mind  
 in a pleasing suspense, and divides it between hopes and  
 fears for the fate of Hector or Achilles.



Gave entrance : thro' that penetrable part  
 Furious he drove the well-directed dart : 410  
 Nor pierc'd the wind-pipe yet, nor took the pow'r  
 Of speech, unhappy ! from thy dying hour.  
 Prone on the field the bleeding warrior lies,  
 While thus triumphing, stern Achilles cries.

At last is Hector stretch'd upon the plain, 415  
 Who fear'd no vengeance for Patroclus slain :  
 Then, prince ! you should have fear'd, what now  
 you feel ;

Achilles absent, was Achilles still.  
 Yet a short space the great avenger stay'd,  
 Then low in dust thy strength and glory lay'd. 420  
 Peaceful he sleeps, with all our rites adorn'd,  
 For ever honour'd, and for ever mourn'd :  
 While cast to all the rage of hostile pow'r,  
 Thee, birds shall mangle, and the dogs devour.

v. 409. *Thro' that penetrable part Furious he drove, &c.*  
 It was necessary that the poet should be very particular in this point, because the arms that Hector wore, were the arms of Achilles, that were taken from Patroclus ; and consequently as they were the work of Vulcan, they would preserve Hector from the possibility of a wound : the poet therefore, to give an air of probability to his story, tells us that they were Patroclus's arms, and as they were not made for Hector, they might not exactly fit his body : so that it is not improbable but there might be some place about the neck of Hector so open, as to admit the spear of Achilles. *Eustathius.*

Then Hector fainting at th' approach of death. 425  
 By thy own soul ! by those who gave thee breath !  
 By all the sacred prevalence of pray'r ;  
 Ah, leave me not for Grecian dogs to tear !  
 The common rites of sepulture bestow,  
 To soothe a father's and a mother's woe ; 430  
 Let their large gifts procure an urn at least,  
 And Hector's ashes in his country rest.

No, wretch accurst ; relentless he replies,  
 (Flames, as he spoke, shot flashing from his eyes)  
 Not those who gave me breath should bid me spare,  
 Nor all the sacred prevalence of pray'r. 436  
 Could I myself the bloody banquet join !  
 No—to the dogs that carcase I resign.  
 Should Troy, to bribe me, bring forth all her store,  
 And giving thousands, offer thousands more ; 440

v. 437. *Could I myself the bloody banquet join !*] I have before hinted that there is something very fierce and violent in this passage ; but I fancy that what I there observed will justify Homer in his relation, though not Achilles in his savage sentiments : yet the poet softens the expression by making Achilles only wish that his *heart would permit him* to devour him : this is much more tolerable than a passage in the *Thebais* of Statius, where Tydeus in the very pangs of death is represented as gnawing the head of his enemy.

v. 439. *Should Troy, to bribe me, &c.*] Such resolutions as Achilles here makes, are very natural to men in anger ; he tells Hector that no motives shall ever prevail with him to suffer his body to be ransomed ; yet when time

Should Dardan Priam, and his weeping dame,  
 Drain their whole realm to buy one fun'ral flame :  
 Their Hector on the pile they should not see,  
 Nor rob the vultures of one limb of thee.

Then thus the chief his dying accents drew ;  
 Thy rage, implacable ! too well I knew : 446  
 The Furies that relentless breast have steel'd,  
 And curst thee with a heart that cannot yield.  
 Yet think, a day will come, when Fate's decree  
 And angry Gods, shall wreak this wrong on thee ;  
 Phoebus and Paris shall avenge my fate, 451  
 And stretch thee here, before this Scæan gate.

had cooled his heat, and he had somewhat satisfied his revenge by insulting his remains, he restores them to Priam. This perfectly agrees with his conduct in the ninth book, where at first he gives a rough denial, and afterwards softens into an easier temper. And this is very agreeable to the nature of Achilles; his anger abates very slowly; it is stubborn, yet still it remits: had the poet drawn him never to be pacified, he had outraged nature, and not represented his hero as a man, but as a monster. *Eustathius.*

v. 449. *A day will come.*] Hector prophesies at his death that Achilles shall fall by the hand of Paris. This confirms an observation made in a former note, that the words of dying men were looked upon as prophecies; but whether such conjectures are true or false, it appears from hence, that such opinions have prevailed in the world above three thousand years.

He ceas'd. The Fates suppress his lab'ring  
 breath,  
 And his eyes stiffen'd at the hand of death;  
 To the dark realm the spirit wings its way, 455  
 (The manly body left a load of clay)  
 And plaintive glides along the dreary coast,  
 A naked, wand'ring, melancholy ghost!

Achilles, musing as he roll'd as his eyes  
 O'er the dead hero, thus (unheard) replies. 460  
 Die thou the first! When Jove and Heav'n ordain,  
 I follow thee—He said, and stripp'd the slain.  
 Then forcing backward, from the gaping wound  
 The reeking jav'lin, cast it on the ground.  
 The thronging Greeks behold with wond'ring eyes  
 His manly beauty and superiour size: 466  
 While some ignobler, the great dead deface

With wounds ungen'rous, or with taunts disgrace.

v. 467. *The great dead deface With wounds, &c.* Eustathius tells us that Homer introduces the soldiers wounding the dead body of Hector, in order to mitigate the cruelties which Achilles exercises upon it. For if every common soldier takes a pride in giving him a wound, what insults may we not expect from the inexorable, inflamed Achilles? But I must confess myself unable to vindicate the poet in giving us such an idea of his countrymen. I think the former courage of their enemy would have been so far from moving them to revenge, that it would have recommended him to their esteem: what Achilles afterwards acts is suitable to his character, and consequently the poet is justified; but surely all the Greeks are not of



"How chang'd that Hector! who like Jove of late,  
 "Sent light'ning on our fleets, and scatter'd fate?"

High o'er the slain the great Achilles stands, 471  
 Begirt with heroes, and surrounding bands;  
 And thus aloud, while all the host attends.  
 Princes and leaders! countrymen and friends!

his temper? Patroclus was not so dear to them all, as he was to Achilles. It is true, the poet represents Achilles (as Eustathius observes) enumerating the many ills they had suffered from Hector; and seems to endeavour to infect the whole army with his resentment. Had Hector been living, they had been acted by a generous indignation against him: but these men seem as if they only dared approach him dead; in short, what they say over his body is a mean insult, and the stabs they give it are cowardly and barbarous.

v. 474. *The speech of Achilles.*] We have a very fine observation of Eustathius on this place, that the judgment and address of Homer here is extremely worthy of remark: he knew, and had often said, that the Gods and Fate had not granted Achilles the glory of taking Troy: there was then no reason to make him march against the town after the death of Hector, since all his efforts must have been ineffectual. What has the poet done in this conjuncture? It was but reasonable that the first thought of Achilles should be to march directly to Troy, and to profit himself of the general consternation into which the death of Hector had thrown the Trojans. We here see he knows the duty, and does not want the ability, of a great general; but after this on a sudden he changes his design, and derives a plausible pretence from the impatience he has to pay the last devoirs to his friend. The manners of Achilles, and what he has already done for Patroclus, make this very natural. At the same time, this

Since now at length the pow'rful will of Heav'n  
 The dire destroyer to our arm has giv'n, 476  
 Is not Troy fall'n already? Haste ye pow'rs!  
 See, if already their deserted tow'rs  
 Are left unmann'd; or if they yet retain  
 The souls of heroes, their great Hector slain? 480  
 But what is Troy, or glory what to me?  
 Or why reflects my mind on ought but thee,  
 Divine Patroclus! Death has seal'd his eyes;  
 Unwept, unhonour'd, uninterr'd he lies!  
 Can his dear image from my soul depart, 485  
 Long as the vital spirit moves my heart?  
 If, in the melancholy shades below,  
 The flames of friends and lovers cease to glow,  
 Yet mine shall sacred last; mine undecay'd,  
 Burn on thro' death, and animate my shade. 490  
 Meanwhile, ye sons of Greece, in triumph bring  
 The corpse of Hector, and your Pæans sing.  
 Be this the song, slow-moving tow'rd the shore,  
 "Hector is dead, and Ilion is no more."

turning off to the tender and pathetick has a fine effect; the reader in the very fury of the hero's vengeance, perceives, that Achilles is still a man, and capable of softer passions.

v. 494. "*Hector is dead, and Ilion is no more.*" I have followed the opinion of Eustathius, who thought that what Achilles says here was the *chorus* or burden of a *song* of triumph, in which his troops bear a part with him, as he returns from this glorious combat. Dacier observes that this is very correspondent to the manners of those times;

Then his fell soul a thought of vengeance bred,  
(Unworthy of himself, and of the dead) 496

and instances in that passage of the book of Kings, when David returned from the conquest of Goliath: the women there go out to meet him from all the cities of Israel, and sing a triumphal song, the chorus whereof is, *Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands.*

V. 496. *Unworthy of himself, and of the dead.*] This inhumanity of Achilles in dragging the dead body of Hector, has been severely (and I think indeed not without some justice) censured by several, both ancients and moderns, Plato in his third book de Republica, speaks of it with detestation: but methinks it is a great injustice to Homer, to reflect upon the morals of the author himself, for things which he only paints as the manners of a vicious hero.

It may justly be observed in general of all Plato's objections against Homer, that they are still in a view to morality, constantly blaming him for representing ill and immoral things as the opinions or actions of his persons. To every one of these, one general answer will serve, which is, that Homer as often describes ill things, in order to make us avoid them, as good, to induce us to follow them, (which is the case with all writers whatever.) But what is extremely remarkable, and evidently shews the injustice of Plato's censure is, that many of those very actions for which he blames him are expressly characterised and marked by Homer himself as evil and detestable, by previous expressions or cautions. Thus in the present place, before he describes this barbarity of Achilles, he tells us it was a most unworthy action.

— — — — — Καὶ ἔνδοξα δῖον ἀνίκητον μῆδεσσι γέγαυε.

When Achilles sacrifices the twelve young Trojans in lib. xxiii. he repeats the same words. When Pandarus

The nervous ancles bor'd, his feet he bound  
 With thongs insert'd thro' the double wound ;  
 These fix'd up high behind the rolling wain,  
 His graceful head was trail'd along the plain. 500  
 Proud on his car th' insulting victor stood,  
 And bore aloft his arms, distilling blood.  
 He smites the steeds ; the rapid chariot flies ;  
 The sudden clouds of circling dust arise.  
 Now lost is all that formidable air ; 505  
 The face divine, and long-descending hair,

broke the truce in lib. iv. he told us it was a mad, unjust deed ;

— — — τῷ δὲ φρένας ἄφρωνι πείθετο.

And so of the rest.

v. 506. *The face divine, and long-descending hair.*] It is impossible to read the actions of great men without having our curiosity rais'd to know the least circumstance that relates to them. Homer, to satisfy it, has taken care in the process of his poem to give us the shape of his heroes, and the very colour of their hair ; thus he has told us, that Achilles's locks were yellow, and here the epithet *Κυάνεαι* shews us that those of Hector were of a darker colour : as to his person, he told us a little above, that it was so handsome, that all the Greeks were surpris'd to see it. Plutarch recites a remarkable story of the beauty of Hector : it was reported in Lacedæmon, that a handsome youth who very much resembled Hector was arriv'd there ; immediately the whole city run in such numbers to behold him, that he was trampled to death by the croud.

*Eustathius.*



Purple the ground, and streak the sable sand ;  
 Deform'd, dishonour'd, in his native land  
 Giv'n to the rage of an insulting throng !  
 And, in his parent's sight, now dragg'd along ! 510

The mother first beheld with sad survey ;  
 She rent her tresses, venerably grey,  
 And cast, far off, the regal veils away. }  
 With piercing shrieks his bitter fate she moans,  
 While the sad father answers groans with groans,  
 Tears after tears his mournful cheeks o'erflow, 516  
 And the whole city wears one face of woe:

No less than if the rage of hostile fires,  
 From her foundations curling to her spires,  
 O'er the proud citadel at length should rise, 520  
 And the last blaze send Ilion to the skies.

The wretched monarch of the falling state,  
 Distracted, presses to the Dardan gate.  
 Scarce the whole people stop his desp'rate course,  
 While strong affliction give the feeble force : 525  
 Grief tears his heart, and drives him to and fro,  
 In all the raging impotence of woe.

At length he roll'd in dust, and thus begun :  
 Imploring all, and naming one by one.  
 Ah ! let me, let me go where sorrow calls ; 530

I, only I, will issue from your walls,  
 (Guide or companion, friends ! I ask ye none)  
 And bow before the murd'rer of my son.

My grief perhaps his pity may engage ;  
 Perhaps at least he may respect my age. 535

He has a father too ; a man like me ;  
 One, not exempt from age and misery,  
 (Vig'rous no more, as when his young embrace  
 Begot this pest of me, and all my race.)  
 How many valiant sons, in early bloom,  
 Has that curst hand sent headlong to the tomb ?  
 Thee, Hector ! last : thy loss (divinely brave)  
 Sinks my sad soul with sorrow to the grave.  
 Oh had thy gentle spirit past in peace,  
 The son expiring in the fire's embrace,  
 While both the parents wept the fatal hour,  
 And bending o'er thee, mix'd the tender show'r !  
 Some comfort that had been, some sad relief,  
 To melt in full satiety of grief !

Thus wail'd the father, grov'ling on the ground,  
 And all the eyes of Ilium stream'd around.

v. 543: *Sinks my sad soul with sorrow to the grave.* It is in the Greek,

Ὁ μ' ἄχ' ἐνὶ τάφῳ λυγρὸν ἔσθ' ἔμω.

It is needless to observe to the reader with what a beautiful *pathos* the wretched father laments his son Hector : it is impossible not to join with Priam in his sorrows. But what I would chiefly point out to my reader, is the beauty of this line, which is particularly tender, and almost word for word with that of the patriarch Jacob ; who upon a like occasion breaks out into the same complaint, and tells his children, that if they deprive him of his son Benjamin, they will *bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.*

Amidst her matrons Hecuba appears,  
 (A mourning princess, and a train in tears)  
 Ah why has Heaven prolong'd this hated breath,  
 Patient of horrors, to behold thy death? 555  
 O Hector! late thy parents pride and joy,  
 The boast of nations! the defence of Troy!  
 To whom her safety and her fame she ow'd;  
 Her chief, her hero, and almost her God!  
 O fatal change! become in one sad day 560  
 A senseless corse! inanimated clay!

But not as yet the fatal news had spread  
 To fair Andromache, of Hector dead;  
 As yet no messenger had told his fate,  
 Nor ev'n his stay without the Scæan gate. 565  
 Far in the close recesses of the dome,  
 Pensive she ply'd the melancholy loom;

v. 561, &c.] The grief of Andromache, which is painted in the following part, is far beyond all the praises that can be given it; but I must take notice of one particular which shews the great art of the poet. In order to make the wife of Hector appear yet more afflicted than his parents, he has taken care to encrease her affliction by *surprise*: it is finely prepared by the circumstances of her being retired to her inmost apartment, of her employment in weaving a robe for her husband (as may be conjectured from what she says afterwards, v. 657.) and of her maids preparing the bath for his return: all which (as the critics have observed) augment the surprise, and render this reverse of fortune much more dreadful and afflictive.

A growing work employ'd her secret hours,  
Confus'dly gay with intermingled flow'rs,  
Her fair-hair'd handmaids heat the brazen urn,  
The bath preparing for her lord's return : 571

In vain : alas ! her lord returns no more !  
Unbath'd he lies, and bleeds along the shore !  
Now from the walls the clamours reach her ear,

And all her members shake with sudden fear ; 575  
Forth from her iv'ry hand the shuttle falls,  
As thus, astonish'd, to her maids she calls.

Ah follow me ! (she cry'd) what plaintive noise  
Invades my ear ? 'Tis sure my mother's voice.

My falt'ring knees their trembling frame desert, 580  
A pulse unusual flutters at my heart ;  
Some strange disaster, some reverse of fate  
(Ye Gods avert it) threatens the Trojan state.

Far be the omen which my thoughts suggest !  
But much I fear my Hector's dauntless breast 585  
Confronts Achilles ; chas'd along the plain,

Shut from our walls ! I fear, I fear him slain !  
Safe in the croud he ever scorn'd to wait,  
And fought for glory in the jaws of fate :

Perhaps that noble heat has cost his breath, 590  
Now quench'd for ever in the arms of death.

She spoke ; and furious, with distracted pace ;  
Fears in her heart, and anguish in her face ;  
Flies thro' the dome, (the maids her steps pursue)  
And mounts the walls, and sends around her view.



Too soon her eyes the killing object found, 596  
 The god-like Hector dragg'd along the ground.  
 A sudden darkness shades her swimming eyes :  
 She faints, she falls ; her breath, her colour flies.  
 Her hair's fair ornaments, the braids that bound,  
 The net that held them, and the wreath that  
 crown'd, 601

[v. 600. *Her hair's fair ornaments.*] Eustathius remarks, that in speaking of Andromache and Hecuba, Homer expatiates upon the ornaments of dress in Andromache, because she was a beautiful young princess ; but is very concise about that of Hecuba, because she was old, and wore a dress more suitable to her age and gravity, than to her state, birth, and condition. I cannot pass over a matter of such importance as a lady's dress, without endeavouring to explain what sort of heads were worn above three thousand years ago.

It is difficult to describe particularly every ornament mentioned by the poet, but I shall lay before my female readers the bishop's explanation. The ἄμυξ was used, τὸ τὰς ἐμπροσθίας τρίχας ἀναδεῖν, that is, to tie backwards the hair that grew on the fore-part of the head : the κεκρύφαλος was a veil of net-work that covered the hair when it was so tied : Ἀναδέσμη was an ornament used κύκλῳ περὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀναδεῖν, to tie backwards the hair that grew on the temples ; and the κρηδεμνον was a fillet, perhaps embroidered with gold, (from the expression of χρυσῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ) that bound the whole, and completed the dress.

The ladies cannot but be pleased to see so much learning and Greek upon this important subject.

Homer is in nothing more excellent than in that distinction of characters which he maintains through his whole poem: what Andromache here says, cannot be spoken pro-

The veil and diadem, flew far away;  
 (The gift of Venus on her bridal day.)  
 Around a train of weeping sisters stands  
 To raise her sinking with assistant hands. 605  
 Scarce from the verge of death recall'd, again  
 She faints, or but recovers to complain.

O wretched husband of a wretched wife!  
 Born with one fate, to one unhappy life!  
 For sure one star its baneful beam display'd 610  
 On Priam's roof and Hippoplacia's shade.  
 From diff'rent parents, diff'rent climes we came,  
 At diff'rent periods, yet our fate the same!  
 Why was my birth to great Aëtion ow'd,  
 And why was all that tender care bestow'd? 615  
 Would I had never been!—O thou, the ghost  
 Of my dead husband! miserably lost!  
 Thou to the dismal realms for ever gone!  
 And I abandon'd, desolate, alone!  
 An only child, once comfort of my pains, 620  
 Sad product now of hapless love, remains!  
 No more to smile upon his fire! no friend  
 To help him now! no father to defend!  
 For should he 'scape the sword, the common doom!  
 What wrongs attend him, and what griefs to come?  
 perly by any but Andromache: there is nothing general  
 in her sorrows, nothing that can be transferred to ano-  
 ther character: the mother laments the son, and the wife  
 weeps over the husband.

Ev'n from his own paternal roof expell'd, 626  
 Some stranger ploughs his matrimonial field.  
 The day, that to the shades the father sends,  
 Robs the sad orphan of his father's friends:  
 He, wretched outcast of mankind! appears 630  
 For ever sad, for ever bath'd in tears;

v. 628. *The day, that to the shades, &c.*] The following verses, which so finely describe the condition of an orphan have been rejected by some antient critics: it is a proof there were always critics of no manner of taste; it being impossible any where to meet with a more exquisite passage. I will venture to say, there are not in all Homer any lines more worthy of him: the beauty of this tender and compassionate image is such, that it even makes amends for the many cruel ones, with which the Iliad is too much stained. These censurers imagined this description to be of too abject and mean a nature of one, of the quality of Aftyanax: but had they considered, (says Eustathius) that these are the words of a fond mother who feared every thing for her son; that women are by nature timorous, and think all misfortunes will happen, because there is a possibility that they may; that Andromache is in the very height of her sorrows, in the instant she is speaking; I fancy they would have altered their opinions.

It is undoubtedly an aggravation to our misfortunes, when they sink us in a moment from the highest flow of prosperity to the lowest of adversity: the poet judiciously makes use of this circumstance the more to excite our pity, and introduces the mother with the utmost tenderness, lamenting this reverse of fortune in her son; changed all at once into a slave, a beggar, an orphan! Have we not examples in our own times of unhappy princes, whose condition renders this of Aftyanax but too probable?

Amongst the happy, unregarded he,  
 Hangs on the robe, or trembles at the knee,  
 While those his father's former bounty fed,  
 Nor reach the goblet, nor divide the bread: 635  
 The kindest but his present wants allay,  
 To leave him wretched the succeeding day.  
 Frugal compassion! Heedless they who boast  
 Both parents still, nor feel what he has lost,  
 Shall cry, "Be gone! thy father feasts not here;"  
 The wretch obeys, retiring with a tear. 641  
 Thus wretched, thus retiring all in tears,  
 To my sad soul Aftyanax appears!  
 Forc'd by repeated insults to return,  
 And to his widow'd mother vainly mourn. 645  
 He, who with tender delicacy bred,  
 With princes sported, and on dainties fed.  
 And when still ev'ning gave him up to rest,  
 Sunk in soft down upon the nurse's breast,  
 Must — ah what must he not? Whom Ilion calls  
 Aftyanax, from her well-guarded walls, 651

v. 647. *On dainties fed.*] It is in the Greek "Who  
 "upon his father's knees, used to eat marrow, and the  
 "fat of sheep." This would seem gross if it were li-  
 terally translated, but it is a figurative expression; in the  
 stile of the Orientals, marrow and fatness are taken for  
 whatever is best, tenderest, and most delicious. Thus in  
 Job xxi. 24. *Viscera ejus plena sunt adipse & medullis ossa*  
*ejus irrigantur.* And xxxvi. 16. *Requies autem mense tue*  
*erit plena pinguedine.* In Jer. xxxi. 14. God says, that he  
 will satiate the soul of the priest with fatness. *Inebriabo*  
*animam sacerdotum pinguedine.* Dacier.



Is now that name no more, unhappy boy!  
 Since now no more the father guards his Troy.  
 But thou, my Hector, ly'ft expos'd in air,  
 Far from thy parents' and thy consort's care, 655  
 Whose hand in vain, directed by her love,  
 The martial scarf and robe of triumph wove.  
 Now to devouring flames be these a prey,  
 Useless to thee, from this accursed day!  
 Yet let the sacrifice at least be paid, 660  
 An honour to the living, not the dead!

So spake the mournful dame: her matrons hear,  
 Sigh back her sighs, and answer tear with tear.

v. 657. *The martial scarf and robe of triumph wove.* This idea very naturally offers itself to a woman, who represents to herself the body of her husband dashed to pieces, and all his limbs dragged upon the ground uncovered; and nothing is more proper to excite pity. It is well known, that it was anciently the custom among princesses and great ladies to have large quantities of stuffs and moveables. This provision was the more necessary in those times than now, because of the great consumption made of them on those occasions of mourning. *Dacier.*

I am of opinion that Homer had a farther view in expatiating thus largely on the death of Hector. Every word that Hecuba, Priam, and Andromache speak, shews us the importance of Hector: every word adds a weight to the concluding action of the poem, and at the same time represents the sad effects of the anger of Achilles, which is the subject of it.

THE  
TWENTY-THIRD BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

VOL. V,

H

## THE A R G U M E N T.

*ACHILLES and the Myrmidons do honours to the body of Patroclus. After the funeral feast he retires to the sea-shore, where falling asleep, the ghost of his friend appears to him, and demands the rites of burial; the next morning the soldiers are sent with mules and waggons to fetch wood for the pyre. The funeral procession, and the offering their hair to the dead. Achilles sacrifices several animals, and lastly twelve Trojan captives at the pile, then sets fire to it. He pays libations to the winds, which (at the instance of Iris) rise, and raise the flames. When the pile has burned all night, they gather the bones, place them in an urn of gold, and raise the tomb. Achilles institutes the funeral games: the chariot-race, the fight of the cestus, the wrestling, the foot-race, the single combat, the discus, the shooting with arrows, the darting the javelin: the various descriptions of which, and the various successs of the several antagonists, make the greatest part of the book.*

*In this book ends the thirtieth day. The night following, the ghost of Patroclus appears to Achilles: the one and thirtieth day is employed in felling the timber for the pile; the two and thirtieth in burning it; and the three and thirtieth in the games. The scene is generally on the sea-shore.*

THE  
\* TWENTY-THIRD BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

**T**HUS humbled in the dust, the pensive train  
Thro' the sad city mourn'd her hero slain.  
The body soil'd with dust, and black with gore,  
Lies on broad Hellespont's resounding shore :

\* This, and the following book, which contain the description of the funeral of Patroclus, and other matters relating to Hector, are undoubtedly superadded to the grand catastrophe of the poem ; for the story is compleatly finish'd with the death of that hero in the twenty-second book. Many judicious criticks have been of opinion, that Homer is blameable for protracting it. Virgil closes the whole scene of action with the death of Turnus, and leaves the rest to be imagined by the mind of the reader ; he does not draw the picture at full length, but delineates it so far, that we cannot fail of imagining the whole draught. There is however one thing to be said in favour of Homer, which may perhaps justify him in his method, that what he undertook to paint was the *anger of Achilles* : and as that anger does not die with Hector, but persecutes his very remains, so the poet still keeps up to his subject ; nay,



The Grecians seek their ships, and clear the strand,  
 All, but the martial Myrmidonian band : 6  
 These yet assembled great Achilles holds,  
 And the stern purpose of his mind unfolds.

Not yet (my brave companions of the war)  
 Release your smoking courfers from the car ; 10

it seems to require that he should carry down the relation of that repentment, which is the foundation of his poem, till it is fully satisfied : and as this survives Hector, and gives the poet an opportunity of still shewing many sad effects of Achilles's anger, the two following books may be thought not to be excrescencies, but essential to the poem.

Virgil had been inexcuseable had he trod in Homer's footsteps ; for it is evident that the fall of Turnus, by giving Æneas a full power over Italy, answers the whole design and intention of the poem ; had he gone further, he had overshot his mark : and though Homer proceeds after Hector's death, yet the subject is still the *anger of Achilles*.

We are now past the war and violence of the Ilias, the scenes of blood are closed during the rest of the poem ; we may look back with a pleasing kind of horror upon the anger of Achilles, and see what dire effects it has wrought in the compass of nineteen days : Troy and Greece are both in mourning for it, Heaven and Earth, Gods and Men, have suffered in the conflict. The reader seems landed upon the shore after a violent storm ; and has leisure to survey the consequences of the tempest, and the wreck occasioned by the former commotions, Troy weeping for Hector, and Greece for Patroclus. Our passions have been in an agitation since the opening of the poem wherefore the poet, like some great master in musick, softens his notes, and melts his readers into tenderness and pity.

But, with his chariot each in order led,  
Perform due honours to Patroclus dead.  
E'er yet from rest or food we seek relief,  
Some rites remain, to glut our rage of grief.

The troops obey'd; and thrice in order led 15  
Achilles first) their coursers round the dead;  
And thrice their sorrows and laments renew;  
Tears bathe their arms, and tears the sands bedew.

v. 18. *Tears bathe their arms, and tears the sands bedew,  
— — — — Thetis aids their woe.]*

It is not easy to give a reason why Thetis should be said to excite the grief of the Myrmidons and of Achilles; it had seemed more natural for the mother to have composed the sorrows of the son, and restored his troubled mind to tranquillity.

But such a procedure would have outraged the character of Achilles, who is all along described to be of such a violence of temper, that he is not easy to be pacified at any time, much less upon so great an incident as the death of his friend Patroclus. Perhaps the poet made use of this fiction in honour of Achilles; he makes every passion of his hero considerable, his sorrow as well as anger is important, and he cannot grieve but a Goddess attends him, and a whole army weeps.

Some commentators fancy that Homer animates the very sands of the seas, and the arms of the Myrmidons, and makes them sensible of the loss of Patroclus; the preceding words seem to strengthen that opinion, because the poet introduces a Goddess to raise the sorrow of the army. But Eustathius seems not to give into this conjecture, and I think very judiciously; for what relation is there between the sands of the shores, and the arms of the Myrmidons? It would have been more poetical to have

For such a warrior Thetis aids their woe,  
 Melts their strong hearts, and bids their eyes to flow.  
 But chief, Pelides: thick-succeeding sighs 21  
 Burst from his heart, and torrents from his eyes:  
 His slaughter'ring hands, yet red with blood, he laid  
 On his dead friend's cold breast, and thus he said.

said, the sands and the rocks, than the sands and the arms;  
 but it is very natural to say, that the soldiers wept so bit-  
 terly, that their armour and the very sands were wet with  
 their tears. I believe this remark will appear very just by  
 reading the verse, with a comma after *τέχνα*, thus:

Δεύοντο δάμασθαι, δεύοντο δὲ τέχνα, πολλὰν  
 δάκρυσι.

Then the construction will be natural and easy, period will  
 answer period in the Greek, and the sense in English will  
 be, the sands were wet, and the arms were wet, with the  
 tears of the mourners.

But however this be, there is a very remarkable beauty  
 in the run of these verses in Homer, every word has a me-  
 lancholy cadence, and the poet has not only made the  
 sands and the arms, but even his very verse, to lament  
 with Achilles.

v. 23. *His slaughter'ring hands, yet red with blood, he laid  
 On his dead friend's cold breast—*]

I could not pass by this passage without observing to my  
 reader the great beauty of this epithet, *ἀνδροφόνος*. An or-  
 dinary poet would have contented himself with saying, he  
 laid his hand upon the breast of Patroclus; but Homer  
 knows how to raise the most trivial circumstances, and by  
 adding this one word, he laid his *deadly* hands, or his  
*murderous* hands, he fills our minds with great ideas, and  
 by a single epithet recalls to our thoughts all the noble at-  
 achievements of Achilles through the Iliad.

All hail, Patroclus ! let thy honour'd ghost 25  
 Hear, and rejoice on Pluto's dreary coast ;  
 Behold ! Achilles' promise is compleat ;  
 The bloody Hector stretch'd before thy feet.  
 Lo ! to the dogs his carcase I resign ;  
 And twelve sad victims, of the Trojan line, 30  
 Sacred to vengeance, instant, shall expire ;  
 Their lives effus'd around thy fun'ral pyre.

Gloomy he said, and (horrible to view)  
 Before the bier the bleeding Hector threw,  
 Prone on the dust. The Myrmidons around 35  
 Unbrac'd their armour, and the steeds unbound.  
 All to Achilles' fable ship repair,  
 Frequent and full, the genial feast to share.  
 Now from the well-fed swine black smokes aspire,  
 The bristly victims hissing o'er the fire : 40  
 The huge ox bellowing falls ; with feeble cries  
 Expires the goat ; the sheep in silence dies.  
 Around the hero's prostrate body flow'd  
 In one promiscuous stream, the-reeking blood.  
 And now a band of Argive monarchs brings 45  
 The glorious victor to the king of kings.  
 From his dead friend the pensive warrior went,  
 With steps unwilling, to the regal tent.

v. 25. *All hail, Patroclus, &c.*] There is in this apostrophe of Achilles to the ghost of Patroclus, a sort of savageness, and a mixture of softness and atrocity, which are highly conformable to his character. *Dacier.*



Th' attending heralds, as by office bound,  
 With kindled flames the tripod-vase surround ; 50  
 To cleanse his conqu'ring hands from hostile gore,  
 They urg'd in vain ; the chief refus'd, and swore.

No drop shall touch me, by almighty Jove !  
 The first and greatest of the Gods above !  
 'Till on the pyre I place thee ; 'till I rear 55  
 The grassy mound, and clip thy sacred hair,  
 Some ease at least those pious rites may give,  
 And soothe my sorrows, while I bear to live.  
 Howe'er, reluctant as I am, I stay,  
 And share your feast ; but, with the dawn of  
 day, 60  
 (O king of men !) it claims thy royal care,  
 That Greece the warrior's fun'ral pile prepare.  
 And bid the forests fall : (such rites are paid  
 To heroes slumb'ring in eternal shade)  
 Then, when his earthly part shall mount in  
 fire, 65  
 Let the leagu'd squadrons to their posts retire,

v. 51. *To cleanse his conqu'ring hands —*  
*— — — The chief refus'd —*]

This is conformable to the custom of the orientals: Achilles will not be induced to wash, and afterwards retires to the sea-shore, and sleeps on the ground. It is just thus that David mourns in the Scriptures; he refuses to wash, or to take any repast, but retires from company, and lies upon the earth.

He spoke; they hear him, and the word obey; }  
 The rage of hunger and of thirst allay, }  
 Then ease in sleep the labours of the day. }  
 But great Pelides, stretch'd along the shore, 70  
 Where dash'd on rocks the broken billows roar,  
 Lies inly groaning; while on either hand  
 The martial Myrmidons confus'dly stand.  
 Along the grass his languid members fall,  
 Tir'd with his chase around the Trojan wall; 75  
 Hush'd by the murmurs of the rolling deep,  
 At length he sinks in the soft arms of sleep.  
 When lo! the shade, before his closing eyes,  
 Of sad Patroclus rose, or seem'd to rise;  
 In the same robe he living wore, he came; 80  
 In stature, voice, and pleasing look, the same.  
 The form familiar hover'd o'er his head,  
 And sleeps Achilles (thus the phantom said)  
 Sleeps my Achilles, his Patroclus dead? }

v. 78. *The ghost of Patroclus.*] Homer has introduced into the former parts of the poem the personages of Gods and Goddesses from heaven, and of Furies from hell: he has embellished it with ornaments from earth, sea, and air; and he here opens a new scene, and brings to the view a ghost, the shade of the departed friend. By these methods he diversifies his poem with new and surprising circumstances, and awakens the attention of the reader; at the same time he very poetically adapts his language to the circumstances of this imaginary Patroclus, and teaches us the opinions that prevailed in his time, concerning the state of separate souls.

Living, I seem'd his dearest, tend'rest care, 85  
 But now forgot, I wander in the air.  
 Let my pale corse the rites of burial know,  
 And give me ent'rance in the realms below :  
 Till then, the spirit finds no resting place,  
 But here and there th' unbody'd spectres chase 90  
 The vagrant dead around the dark abode,  
 Forbid to cross th' irremeable flood.

v. 92. *Forbid to cross th' irremeable flood.*] It was the common opinion of the ancients, that the souls of the departed were not admitted into the number of the happy till their bodies had received the funeral rites ; they supposed those that wanted them wandered an hundred years before they were wafted over the infernal river ; Virgil perhaps had this passage of Homer in his view in the sixth *Æneis*, at least he coincides with his sentiments concerning the state of the departed souls.

“ Hæc omnis, quam cernis inops inhumataque turba est :  
 “ Nec ripas datur horrendas, nec rauca fluentia  
 “ Transportare prius, quam sedibus ossa quierunt ;  
 “ Centum errant annos, volitantque hæc littora circum ;  
 “ Tum demum admissi stagna exoptata revifunt.”

It was during this interval between death and the rites of funeral, that they supposed the only time allowed for separate spirits to appear to men ; therefore Patroclus here tells his friend,

————— To the farther shore  
 When once we pass, the soul returns no more.

For the fuller understanding of Homer, it is necessary to be acquainted with his notion of the state of the soul after death : he followed the philosophy of the *Ægyptians*, who supposed man to be compounded of three parts, an intel-

Now give thy hand ; for to the farther shore  
 When once we pass, the soul returns no more :  
 When once the last funereal flames ascend, 95  
 No more shall meet Achilles and his friend ;  
 No more our thoughts to those we lov'd make  
 known ;

Or quit the dearest, to converse alone.  
 Me fate has sever'd from the sons of earth,  
 The fate fore-doom'd that waited from my birth :  
 Thee too it waits ; before the Trojan wall 101  
 Ev'n great and god-like thou, art doom'd to fall.  
 Hear then ; and as in fate and love we join,  
 Ah suffer that my bones may rest with thine !

ligent mind, a vehicle for that mind, and a body ; the mind they call *φρῆν*, or *ψυχῆ*, the vehicle *εἰδωλον*, *image* or *soul*, and the gross body *σῶμα*. The soul, in which the mind was lodged, was supposed exactly to resemble the body in shape, magnitude, and features ; for this being in the body, as the statue in its mold, so soon as it goes forth is properly the image of that body in which it was enclosed : this it was that appeared to Achilles, with the full resemblance of his friend Patroclus. Vid. Dacier's Life of Pythagoras, p. 71.

v. 104. *Ah suffer that my bones may rest with thine.*] There is something very pathetic in this whole speech of Patroclus ; he begins it with kind reproaches, and blames Achilles with a friendly tenderness ; he recounts to him the inseparable affection that had been between them in their lives, and makes it his last request, that they may not be parted even in death, but that their bones may rest in the same urn. The speech itself is of a due length ; it ought not to be very short, because this appa-



Together have we liv'd ; together bred, 105  
 One house receiv'd us, and one table fed ;  
 That golden urn, thy goddess-mother gave,  
 May mix our ashes in one common grave.

And is it thou ? (he answers) to my fight 109  
 Once more return'st thou from the realms of night ?  
 Oh more than brother ! Think each office paid,  
 Whate'er can rest a discontented shade ;  
 But grant one last embrace, unhappy boy !  
 Afford at least that melancholy joy.

He said, and with his longing arms essay'd 115  
 In vain to grasp the visionary shade ;  
 Like a thin smoke he sees the spirit fly,  
 And hears a feeble lamentable cry.  
 Confus'd he wakes ; amazement breaks the bands  
 Of golden sleep, and starting from the sands, 120  
 Pensive he muses with uplifted hands.

rition is an incident entirely different from any other in the whole poem, and consequently the reader would not have been satisfied with a cursory mention of it ; neither ought it to be long, because this would have been contrary to the nature of such apparitions, whose stay upon earth has ever been described as very short, and consequently they cannot be supposed to use many words.

The circumstance of being buried in the same urn, is entirely conformable to the eastern custom : there are innumerable instances in the scriptures of great personages being buried with their fathers : so Joseph would not suffer his bones to rest in Ægypt, but commands his brethren to carry them into Canaan, to the burying-place of his father Jacob.

'Tis true, 'tis certain ; man tho' dead, retains  
Part of himself : th' immortal mind remains :  
The form subsists without the body's aid,  
Ærial semblance, and an empty shade ! 125

v. 124. *The form subsists without the body's aid,  
Ærial semblance, and an empty shade.]*

The words of Homer are,

Ἄτὰρ Φρένες ἢ ἐνὶ πάμπαν.

In which there seems to be a great difficulty : it being not easy to explain how Achilles can say that the ghost of his friend had no understanding, when it had but just made such a rational and moving speech ; especially when the poet introduces the apparition with the very shape, air, and voice of Patroclus.

But this passage will be clearly understood, by explaining the notion which the ancients entertained of the souls of the departed, according to the fore-cited triple division of *mind*, *image*, and *body*. They imagined that the soul was not only separated from the body at the hour of the death, but that there was a farther separation of the φρῆν, or understanding, from its εἶδωλον, or vehicle ; so that while the εἶδωλον, or image of the body, was in hell, the φρῆν, or understanding might be in heaven : and that this is a true explication, is evident from a passage in the Odyssey, book xi. v. 600.

Τὸν δὲ μετ', εἰσενόησα βίην Ἡρακλεΐην,  
εἶδωλον αὐτὶς δὲ μετ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι  
τέρεται ἐν θαλάῃς, καὶ ἔχει καλλίσφυρον ἦΐην.

Now I the strength of Hercules behold,  
A tow'ring spectre of gigantick mold ;  
A shadowy form ! for high in heav'n's abodes  
Himself resides, a God among the Gods :

This night my friend, so late in battle lost,  
 Stood at my side, a pensive, plaintive ghost;  
 E'vn now familiar, as in life, he came,  
 Alas! how diff'rent! yet how like the same!

Thus while he spoke, each eye grew big with  
 tears: 130

And now the rosy-finger'd morn appears,  
 Shews ev'ry mournful face with tears o'erspread,  
 And glares on the pale visage of the dead.  
 But Agamemnon, as the rites demand,  
 With mules and waggons sends a chosen band 135

There in the bright assemblies of the skies  
 He nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.

By this it appears that Homer was of opinion that Hercules was in heaven, while his εἰδωλον, or image, was in hell: so that when this second separation is made, the image or vehicle becomes a mere thoughtless form.

We have this whole doctrine very distinctly delivered by Plutarch in these words: "Man is a compound subject; but not of two parts, as is commonly believed, " because the *understanding* is generally accounted a part " of the *soul*; whereas indeed it as far exceeds the soul, " as the soul is diviner than the body. Now the soul, " when compounded with the understanding, makes reason; and when compounded with the body, passion: " whereof the one is the source or principle of pleasure " or pain, the other of vice or virtue. Man therefore " properly dies two deaths; the first makes him two of " three, and the second makes him one of two." *Plutarch, of the face in the moon.*

Book XXIII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 111

To load the timber, and the pile to rear ;  
 A charge consign'd to Merion's faithful care.  
 With proper instruments they take the road,  
 Axes to cut, and ropes to sling the load.  
 First march the heavy mules, securely flow, 140  
 O'er hills, o'er dales, o'er crags, o'er rocks they go :

V. 141. *O'er hills, o'er dales, o'er crags, o'er rocks they go—  
 On all sides round the forest hurls her oaks  
 Headlong.] —*

The numbers in the original of this whole passage are admirably adapted to the images the verses convey to us. Every ear must have felt the propriety of sound in this line,

Πολλὰ δ' ἀνάντα, κάτωτα, πάντ' αὖτε, δόχμιά τ' ἔλθον,

The other in its kind is no less exact,

Τάμνον ἐπειγόμενοι, ταὶ δὲ μεγάλα κλυτεύσαι.  
 Πίπτον —

Dionysius of Halicarnassus has collected many instances of these sorts of beauties in Homer. This description of felling the forests, so excellent as it is, is comprehended in a few lines, which has left room for a larger and more particular one in Statius, one of the best (I think) in that author.

“ — — — Cadit ardua fagus,  
 “ Chaoniumque nemus, brumæque illæsa cupressus ;  
 “ Procumbunt piceæ, flammis alimenta supremis,  
 “ Ornique, ilicæque trabes, metuandaque sulco  
 “ Taxus, & infandos belli potura cruores  
 “ Fraxinus, atque situ non expugnabile robur :  
 “ Hinc audax abies, & odoro vulnere pinus  
 “ Scinditur, acclinant intonsa cacumina terræ  
 “ Alnus amica fretis, nec inhospita vitibus ulmus, &c.”



Jumping, high o'er the shrubs of the rough ground,  
 Rattle the clatt'ring cars, and the shockt axles bound.  
 But when arriv'd at Ida's spreading woods,  
 (Fair Ida, water'd with descending floods) 145  
 Loud sounds the ax, redoubling strokes on strokes ;  
 On all sides round the forest hurls her oaks  
 Headlong. Deep-echoing groan the thickets brown ;  
 Then rustling, crackling, crashing, thunder down.  
 The wood the Grecians clave, prepar'd to burn ;  
 And the slow mules the same rough road return. 151  
 The sturdy woodmen equal burdens bore  
 (Such charge was giv'n 'em) to the sandy shore ;  
 There on the spot which great Achilles show'd,  
 They eas'd their shoulders, and dispos'd the load ; 155

I the rather cite this fine passage, because I find it copied  
 by two of the greatest poets of our own nation. Chaucer  
 and Spencer. The first in the *Assembly of Fowls*, the second  
 in his *Fairy Queen*, lib. i.

The failing pine, the cedar proud and tall,  
 The vine-prop elm, the poplar never dry,  
 The builder oak, sole king of forests all,  
 The aspin good for staves, the cypres funeral.  
 The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors,  
 And poets sage ; the fir that weepeth still,  
 The willow, worn of forlorn paramours,  
 The yew obedient to the bender's will,  
 The birch for shafts, the fallow for the mill,  
 The myrrh, sweet-bleeding in the bitter wound,  
 The warlike beech, the ash for nothing ill,  
 The fruitful olive, and the plantane round,  
 The carver holme, the maple seldom inward sound,

Circling around the place, where times to come  
 Shall view Patroclus' and Achilles' tomb.  
 The hero bids his martial troops appear  
 High on their cars in all the pomp of war ;  
 Each in refulgent arms his limbs attires, 160  
 All mount their chariots, combatants and squires.  
 The chariots first proceed, a shining train ;  
 Then clouds of foot that smoke along the plain ;  
 Next these the melancholy band appear,  
 Amidst, lay dead Patroclus on the bier : 165  
 O'er all the corse their scatter'd locks they throw ;  
 Achilles next, oppress'd with mighty woe,

v. 160. *Each in refulgent arms, &c.*] It is not to be supposed that this was a general custom used at all funerals ; but Patroclus being a warrior, he is buried like a soldier, with military honours. *Eustathius*.

v. 166. *O'er all the corse their scatter'd locks they throw.*] The ceremony of cutting off the hair in honour of the dead, was practised not only among the Greeks, but also among other nations ; thus Statius Thebaid VI.

“ — — — Tergoque & pectore fusam  
 “ Cæsariem ferro minuit, sectisque jacentis  
 “ Obnubit tenuia ora comis.”

This custom is taken notice of in holy Scripture : Ezekiel describing a great lamentation, says, *They shall make themselves utterly bald for thee*, ch. xxvii. v. 31. I believe it was done not only in token of sorrow, but perhaps had a concealed meaning, that as the hair was cut from the head, and was never more to be joined to it, so was the dead for ever cut off from the living, never more to return.

Supporting with his hands the hero's head,  
 Bends o'er th' extended body of the dead.  
 Patroclus decent on the appointed ground 170  
 They place, and heap the filvan pile around,

I must observe that this ceremony of cutting off the hair was not always in token of sorrow; Lycophron in his *Cassandra*, v. 976. describing a general lamentation, says,

Κρατὸς δ' ἄκμῃος νῶτα καλλύνει φύκη.

A length of unshorn hair adorn'd their backs.

And that the ancients sometimes had their hair cut off in token of joy, is evident from Juvenal, Sat. xii. v. 82.

“ — — Gaudent ibi vertice raso

“ Garrula securi narrare pericula nautæ.”

This seeming contradiction will be solved by having respect to the different practices of different nations. If it was the general custom of any country to wear long hair, then the cutting it off was a token of sorrow; but if it was the custom to wear short hair, then the letting it grow long and neglecting it, shewed that such people were mourners.

v. 168. *Supporting with his hands the hero's head.*] Achilles follows the corpse as chief mourner, and sustains the head of his friend: this last circumstance seems to be general; thus Euripides in the funeral of Rhesus, v. 886.

Τίς ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς θεός, ὦ βασιλεῦ,  
 Τὸν νεώδμητον ἐν χερσὶν  
 Φορέαδην πέμπει;

*What God, O king, with his hands supports the head of the deceased?*

But great Achilles stands apart in pray'r,  
 And from his head divides the yellow hair;  
 Those curling locks which from his youth he vow'd,  
 And sacred grew, to Sperchius' honour'd flood: 175  
 Then sighing, to the deep his looks he cast,  
 And roll'd his eyes around the wat'ry waste.

Sperchius! whose waves in mazy errors lost  
 Delightful roll along my native coast!  
 To whom we vainly vow'd, at our return, 180  
 These locks to fall, and hecatombs to burn:  
 Full fifty rams to bleed in sacrifice,  
 Where to the day thy silver fountain rise,  
 And where in shade of consecrated bow'rs  
 Thy altars stand, perfum'd with native flow'rs! 185  
 So vow'd my father, but he vow'd in vain;  
 No more Achilles sees his native plain;

v. 175. *And sacred grew, to Sperchius' honour'd flood.*]  
 It was the custom of the ancients not only to offer their own hair, but likewise to consecrate that of their children to the river-gods of their country. This is what Pausanias shews in his Atticks: *Before you pass the Cephisa* (says he) *you find the tomb of Theodorus, who was the most excellent actor of his time for tragedy; and on the banks you see two statues, one of Mnesimachus, and the other of his son, who cut off his hair in honour of the rivers; for that this was in all ages the custom of the Greeks, may be inferred from Homer's poetry, where Peleus promises by a solemn vow to consecrate to the river Sperchius the hair of his son, if he returns safe from the Trojan war.* This custom was likewise in Ægypt, where Philostratus tells us, that Memnon consecrated his hair to the Nile. This practice of Achilles was imitated by Alexander at the funeral of Hephæstion. Spondanus.



In that vain hope these hairs no longer grow,  
 Patroclus bears them to the shades below.

Thus o'er Patroclus while the hero pray'd, 190  
 On his cold hand the sacred lock he laid.

Once more afresh the Grecian sorrows flow :

And now the sun had set upon their woe ;

But to the king of men thus spoke the chief.

Enough Atrides ! give the troops relief : 195

Permit the mourning regions to retire,

And let the chiefs alone attend the pyre ;

The pious care be ours, the dead to burn ——

He said : the people to their ships return ;

While those deputed to interr the slain, 200

Heap with a rising pyramid the plain.

A hundred foot in length, a hundred wide,

The growing structure spreads on ev'ry side ;

High on the top the manly corse they lay,

And well-fed sheep, and fable oxen slay : 205

Achilles cover'd with their fat the dead,

And the pil'd victims round the body spread ;

Then jars of honey, and of fragrant oil,

Suspends around, low-bending o'er the pile.

Four sprightly coursers, with a deadly groan 210

Pour forth their lives, and on the pyre are thrown.

Of nine large dogs, domestick at his board,

Fall two, selected to attend their lord.

Then last of all, and horrible to tell,

Sad sacrifice ! twelve Trojan captives fell. 215

Of these the rage of fire victorious preys,  
Involves and joins them in one common blaze.  
Smear'd with the bloody rites, he stands on high,  
And calls the spirit with a dreadful cry.

All hail, Patroclus! let thy vengeful ghost 220  
Hear, and exult on Pluto's dreary coast.  
Behold, Achilles' promise fully paid,  
Twelve Trojan heroes offer'd to thy shade;  
But heavier fates on Hector's corse attend,  
Sav'd from the flames, for hungry dogs to rend. 225

So spake he, threat'ning: but the Gods made vain  
His threat, and guard inviolate the slain:  
Celestial Venus hover'd o'er his head,  
And roseate unguents, heav'nly fragrance! shed:

v. 228. *Celestial Venus, &c.*] Homer has here introduced a series of allegories in the compass of a few lines; the body of Hector may be supposed to continue beautiful even after he was slain; and Venus being the president of beauty, the poet by a natural fiction tells us it was preserved by that Goddess.

Apollo's covering the body with a cloud is a very natural allegory: for the sun (says Eustathius) has a double quality which produces contrary effects: the heat of it causes a dryness, but at the same time it exhales the vapours of the earth, from whence the clouds of heaven are formed. This allegory may be founded upon truth; there might happen to be a cool season while Hector lay unburied, and Apollo, or the sun, raising clouds which intercept the heat of his beams, by a very easy fiction in poetry may be introduced in person to preserve the body of Hector.

118 HOMER'S ILIAD. Book XXIII.

She watch'd him all the night, and all the day, 230  
And drove the bloodhounds from their destin'd  
prey.

Nor sacred Phœbus less employ'd his care ;  
He pour'd around a veil of gather'd air,  
And kept the nerves undry'd, the flesh entire,  
Against the solar beam and Sirian fire. 235

Nor yet the pile where dead Patroclus lies,  
Smokes, nor as yet the fullen flames arise ;  
But fast beside, Achilles flood in pray'r,  
Invok'd the Gods whose spirit moves the air,  
And victims promis'd, and libations cast, 240

To gentle Zephyr and the Boreal blast :  
He call'd, th' aerial Pow'rs, along the skies  
To breathe, and whisper to the fires to rise,  
The winged Iris heard the hero's call,  
And instant hasten'd to their airy hall, 245

Where, in old Zephyr's open courts on high,  
Sat all the blust'ring brethren of the sky.  
She shone amidst them, on her painted bow ;  
The rocky pavement glitter'd with the show.  
All from the banquet rise, and each invites 250  
The various Goddesses to partake the rites.

Not so, (the dame reply'd) I haste to go  
To sacred Ocean, and the floods below :  
Ev'n now our solemn hecatombs attend, 254  
And heav'n is feasting, on the world's green end,  
With righteous Æthiops (uncorrupted train!)  
Far on th' extremest limits of the main.

But Peleus' son intreats, with sacrifice,  
The Western Spirit, and the North to rise;  
Let on Patroclus' pile your blast be driv'n, 260  
And bear the blazing honours high to Heav'n.

Swift as the word she vanish'd from their view;  
Swift as the word the winds tumultuous flew;

v. 263. *The allegory of the winds.*] A poet ought to express nothing vulgarly; and sure no poet ever trespassed less against this rule than Homer; the fruitfulness of his invention is continually raising incidents new and surprising. Take this passage out of its poetical dress, and it will be no more than this: a strong gale of wind blew, and so increased the flame, that it consumed the pile. But Homer introduces the Gods of the winds in person: and Iris, or the rainbow, being (as Eustathius observes) a sign not only of showers, but of winds; he makes them come at her summons.

Every circumstance is well adapted. As soon as the winds see Iris, they rise; that is, when the rainbow appears, the wind rises: she refuses to sit, and immediately returns; that is, the rainbow is never seen long at one time, but soon appears, and soon vanishes; she returns over the ocean: that is, the bow is composed of waters, and it would have been an unnatural fiction to have described her as passing by land.

The winds are all together in the cave of Zephyrus, which may imply that they were there as at their general rendezvous; or that the nature of all the winds is the same; or that the western wind is in that country the most constant, and consequently it may be said that at such seasons all the winds are assembled in one corner, or rendezvous with Zephyrus.



Forth burst the stormy band with thund'ring roar,  
 And heaps on heaps the clouds are tost before. 265  
 To the wide main then stooping from the skies,  
 The heaving deeps in wat'ry mountains rise:  
 'Troy feels the blast along her shaking walls,  
 'Till on the pile the gather'd tempest falls.  
 The structure crackles in the roaring fires, 270  
 And all the night the plenteous flame aspires.  
 All night Achilles hails Patroclus' foul,  
 With large libation from the golden bowl.  
 As a poor father, helpless and undone,  
 Mourns o'er the ashes of an only son, 275  
 Takes a sad pleasure the last bones to burn,  
 And pour in tears, e'er yet they close the urn:  
 So stay'd Achilles, circling round the shore,  
 So watch'd the flames, 'till now they flame no more.

Iris will not enter the cave: it is the nature of the rainbow to be stretched entirely upon the surface, and therefore this fiction is agreeable to reason.

When Iris says that the Gods are partaking hecatombs in Æthiopia, it is to be remembered that the Gods are represented there in the first book, before the scenes of war were opened; and now they are closed, they return thither. *Eustathius*.—Thus Homer makes the anger of his hero so important, that it roused heaven to arms, and now when it is almost appeased, Achilles as it were gives peace to the Gods.

Book XXIII. HOMER'S I L I A D. 121

'Twas when, emerging thro the shades of night, 280  
The morning planet told th' approach of light ;  
And fast behind, Aurora's warmer ray  
O'er the broad ocean pour'd the golden day :  
Then sunk the blaze, the pile no longer burn'd,  
And to their caves the whistling winds return'd ; 285  
Across the Thracian seas their course they bore ;  
The ruffled seas beneath their passage roar.

Then parting from the pile he ceas'd to weep,  
And sunk to quiet in th' embrace of sleep,  
Exhausted with his grief : meanwhile the croud 290  
Of thronging Grecians round Achilles stood ;  
The tumult wak'd him : from his eyes he shook  
Unwilling slumber, and the chiefs bespoke.

Ye kings and princes of the Achaian name !  
First let us quench the yet remaining flame 295  
With fable wine ; then, (as the rites direct,)  
The hero's bones with careful view select ;  
(Apart, and easy to be known they lie  
Amidst the heap, and obvious to the eye :  
The rest around the margins will be seen 300  
Promiscuous, steeds and immolated men)  
These, wrapt in double cawls of fat, prepare ;  
And in the golden vase dispose with care ;  
There let them rest with decent honour laid,  
'Till I shall follow to th' infernal shade. 305  
Meantime erect the tomb with pious hands,  
A common structure on the humble sands ;

Hereafter Greece some nobler work may raise,  
And late posterity record our praise. 309

The Greeks obey; where yet the embers glow,  
Wide o'er the pile the sable wine they throw,  
And deep subsides the ashy heap below. }

Next the white bones his sad companions place  
With tears collected, in the golden vase.

The sacred relicks to the tent they bore; 315  
The urn a veil of linen cover'd o'er.

That done, they bid the sepulchre aspire,  
And cast the deep foundations round the pyre;  
High in the midst they heap the swelling bed  
Of rising earth, memorial of the dead. 320

The swarming populace the chief detains,  
And leads amidst a wide extent of plains;  
There plac'd 'em round: then from the ships proceeds  
A train of oxen, mules, and stately steeds,

v. 308. *Hereafter Greece a nobler pile shall raise.*] We see how Achilles consults his own glory; the desire of it prevails over his tenderness for Patroclus, and he will not permit any man, not even his beloved Patroclus, to share an equality of honour with himself, even in the grave. *Eustathius.*

v. 321. *The games for Patroclus.*] The conduct of Homer in enlarging upon the games at the funeral of Patroclus is very judicious: there had undoubtedly been such honours paid to several heroes during this war, as appears from a passage in the ninth book, where Agamemnon, to enhance the value of the horses which he offers Achilles, says, that any person would be rich that had treasures equal to the value of the prizes they had won; which races must have been run during the siege: or had they been before it, the horses would now have

Vases and tripods, (for the fun'ral games;) 325

Resplendent brass, and more resplendent dames.

First stood the prizes to reward the force

Of rapid racers in the dusty course:

A woman for the first, in beauty's bloom,

Skill'd in the needle, and the lab'ring loom; 330

And a large vase, where two bright handles rise,

Of twenty measures its capacious size.

The second victor claims a mare unbroke,

Big with a mule, unknowing of the yoke;

The third, a charger yet untouch'd by flame; 335

Four ample measures held the shining frame:

been too old to be of any value, this being the tenth year of the war. But the poet passes all those games over in silence, and reserves them for this season; not only in honour of Patroclus, but also of his hero Achilles; who exhibits games to a whole army; great generals are candidates for the prizes, and he himself sits the judge and arbitrator: thus in peace as well as war the poet maintains the superiority of the character of Achilles.

But there is another reason why the poet deferred to relate any games that were exhibited at any preceding funerals: the death of Patroclus was the most eminent period; and consequently the most proper time for such games.

It is farther observable, that he chuses this peculiar time with great judgment. When the fury of the war raged, the army could not well have found leisure for the games, and they might have met with interruption from the enemy: but Hector being dead, all Troy was in confusion: they are in too great a consternation to make any attempts, and therefore the poet could not possibly have chosen a more happy opportunity. *Eustathius.*



Two golden talents for the fourth were plac'd ;  
 An ample double bowl contents the last.  
 These in fair order rang'd upon the plain,  
 The hero, rising, thus address'd the train. 340

Behold the prizes, valiant Greeks ! decreed  
 To the brave rulers of the racing steed ;  
 Prizes which none beside ourself could gain,  
 Should our immortal coursers take the plain ;  
 (A race unrivall'd, which from Ocean's God 345  
 Peleus receiv'd, and on his son bestow'd.)  
 But this no time our vigour to display ;  
 Nor suit, with them, the games of this sad day ;  
 Lost is Patroclus now, that wont to deck 349  
 Their flowing manes, and sleek their glossy neck.

v. 349. *Lost is Patroclus now, &c.*] I am not ignorant that Homer has frequently been blamed for such little digressions as these ; in this passage he gives us the genealogy of his horses, which he has frequently told us in the preceding part of the poem. But Eustathius justifies his conduct, and says that it was very proper to commend the virtue of these horses upon this occasion, when horses were to contend for victory : at the same time he takes an opportunity to make an honourable mention of his friend Patroclus, in whose honour these games were exhibited.

It may be added, as a farther justification of Homer, that this last circumstance is very natural ; Achilles, while he commends his horses, remembers how careful Patroclus had been of them : his love for his friend is so great, that the minutest circumstance recalls him to his mind ; and such little digressions, such avocations of thought as these, very naturally proceed from the overflows of love and sorrow.

Sad, as they shar'd in human grief, they stand,  
 And trail those graceful honours on the sand !  
 Let others for the noble task prepare,  
 Who trust the courser, and the flying car.

Fir'd at his word, the rival racers rise ; 355  
 But far the first, Eumelus hopes the prize,  
 Fam'd thro' Pieria for the fleetest breed,  
 And skill'd to manage the high-bounding steed.  
 With equal ardour bold Tydides swell'd, 359  
 The steeds of Tros beneath his yoke compell'd,  
 (Which late obey'd the Dardan chief's command,  
 When scarce a God redeem'd him from his hand.)  
 Then Menelaüs his Podargus brings,  
 And the fam'd courser of the king of kings :  
 Whom rich Echepolus, (more rich than brave) 365  
 To 'scape the wars, to Agamemnon gave,

v. 365. *Whom rich Echepolus, &c.*] One would think that Agamemnon might be accused of avarice, in dispensing with a man from going to the war for the sake of a horse; but Aristotle very well observes, that this prince is praise-worthy for having preferred a horse to a person so cowardly, and so incapable of service. It may be also conjectured from this passage, that even in those elder times it was the custom, that those who were willing to be excused from the war, should give either a horse or a man, and often both. Thus Scipio going to Africa, ordered the Sicilians either to attend him, or to give him horses or men : and Agesilaus being at Ephesus and wanting cavalry, made a proclamation, that the rich men who would not serve in the war should be dispensed with, pro-

(Æthe her name) at home to end his days ;  
 Base wealth preferring to eternal praise.  
 Next him Antilochus demands the course,  
 With beating heart, and cheers his Pylian horse.  
 Experienc'd Nestor gives his son the reins, 371  
 Directs his judgment, and his heat restrains ;

vided they furnished a man and a horse in their stead : in which, says Plutarch, he wisely followed the example of king Agamemnon, who excused a very rich coward from serving in person, for a present of a good mare. *Eustathius. Dacier.*

v. 371. *Experienc'd Nestor, &c.*] The poet omits no opportunity of paying honour to his old favourite Nestor, and I think he is no where more particularly complimented than in this book. His age had disabled him from bearing any share in the games ; and yet he artfully introduces him not as a mere spectator but as an actor in the sports. Thus, he as it were wins the prize for Antilochus ; Antilochus wins not by the swiftness of his horses, but by the wisdom of Nestor.

This fatherly tenderness is wonderfully natural : we see him in all imaginable inquietude and concern for his son ; he comes to the barrier, stands beside the chariot, animates his son by his praises, and directs him by his lessons : you think the old man's soul mounts on the chariot with his Antilochus, to partake the same dangers, and run the same career.

Nothing can be better adapted to the character than this speech ; he expatiates upon the advantages of wisdom over strength, which is a tacit compliment to himself, and had there been a prize for wisdom, undoubtedly the old man would have claimed it as his right. *Eustathius.*

Book XXIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 127

Nor idly warns the hoary fire, nor hears  
The prudent son with unattending ears.

My son ! tho' youthful ardour fire thy breast, 375  
The Gods have lov'd thee, and with arts have blest.

Neptune and Jove on thee conferr'd the skill,  
Swift round the goal to turn the flying wheel.

To guide thy conduct little precept needs ;  
But slow, and past their vigour, are my steeds. 380

Fear not thy rivals, tho' for swiftness known ;

Compare those rivals judgment, and thy own :

It is not strength, but art, obtains the prize,  
And to be swift is less than to be wise. 384

'Tis more by art than force of num'rous strokes,

The dext'rous woodman shapes the stubborn oaks ;

By art the pilot, thro' the boiling deep

And howling tempest, steers the fearless ship ;

And 'tis the artist wins the glorious course,

Not those who trust in chariots, and in horse. 390

In vain ; unskilful, to the goal they strive,

And short, or wide, th' ungovern'd courser drive :

While with sure skill, tho' with inferiour steeds,

The knowing racer to his end proceeds ;

Fix'd on the goal his eye fore-runs the course, 395

His hand unerring steers the steady horse,

And now contracts, or now extends the rein,

Observing still the foremost on the plain.

Mark then the goal, 'tis easy to be found ;

Yon' aged trunk, a cubit from the ground ; 400



Of some once stately oak the last remains,  
 Or hardy fir, unperish'd with the rains :  
 Inclos'd with stones, conspicuous from afar ;  
 And round, a circle for the wheeling car. 404  
 (Some tomb, perhaps, of old ; the dead to grace ;  
 Or then, as now, the limit of a race)  
 Bear close to this, and warily proceed,  
 A little bending to the left-hand steed ;  
 But urge the right, and give him all the reins ; 409  
 While thy strict hand his fellow's head restrains,  
 And turns him short ; 'till, doubling as they roll,  
 The wheel's round naves appear to brush the goal.  
 Yet (not to break the car, or lame the horse)  
 Clear of the stony heap direct the course ;  
 Left thro' incaution failing, thou may'st be 415  
 A joy to others, a reproach to me.  
 So shalt thou pass the goal, secure of mind,  
 And leave unskilful swiftness far behind,  
 Tho' thy fierce rival drove the matchless steed  
 Which bore Adrastus, of celestial breed ; 420  
 Or the fam'd race, thro' all the regions known,  
 That whirl'd the car of proud Laomedon.  
 Thus, (nought unsaid) the much-advising sage  
 Concludes ; then sat, stiff with unweildy age.  
 Next bold Meriones was seen to rise, 425  
 The last, but not least ardent for the prize.

They mount their seats; the lots their place dispose;  
(Roll'd in his helmet, these Achilles throws.)  
Young Nestor leads the race: Eumelus then;  
And next the brother of the king of men: 430

[v. 427. *The lots their place dispose.*] According to these lots the charioteers took their places; but to know whether they stood all in an equal front, or one behind another, is a difficulty: Eustathius says the antients were of opinion, that they did not stand in one front; because it is evident that he who had the first lot, had a great advantage of the other charioteers: if he had not, why should Achilles cast lots? Madam Dacier is of opinion that they all stood a-breast at the barrier, and that the first would still have a sufficient advantage, as he was nearer the bound, and stood within the rest; whereas the others must take a larger circle, and consequently were forced to run a greater compass of ground. Phoenix was placed as an inspector of the race, that is, says Eustathius, he was to make report whether they had observed the laws of the race in their several turnings.

Sophocles observes the same method with Homer in relation to the lots and inspectors, in his *Electra*.

— — Οἱ τέταρτοι βραβεῖς  
κλήροις ἐπείλαν ἃ κατέστησαν δόξον.

*The constituted judges assigned the places according to the lots.*

The ancients say that the charioteers started at the Sigæum, where the ships of Achilles lay, and ran towards the Rhæteum, from the ships towards the shores. But Aristarchus affirmed that they run in the compass of ground those five stadia, which lay between the wall and the tents toward the shore. *Eustathius.*

Thy lot, Meriones, the fourth was cast ;  
 And far the bravest, Diomed, was last.  
 They stand in order, an impatient train ;  
 Pelides points the barrier on the plain,  
 And sends before old Phœnix to the place, 435  
 To mark the racers, and to judge the race.  
 At once the courfers from the barrier bound ;  
 The lifted scourges all at once resound ;  
 Their heart, their eyes, their voice they send before ;  
 And up the champaign thunder from the shore : 440  
 Thick, where they drive, the dusty clouds arise,  
 And the lost courser in the whirlwind flies ;  
 Loose on their shoulders the long manes, reclin'd,  
 Float in their speed, and dance upon the wind :  
 The smoking chariots, rapid as they bound, 445  
 Now seem to touch the sky, and now the ground.  
 While hot for fame, and conquest all their care,  
 (Each o'er his flying courser hung in air)  
 Erect with ardour, pois'd upon the rein, 449  
 They pant, they stretch, they shout along the plain.  
 Now, (the last compass fetch'd around the goal)  
 At the near prize each gathers all his soul,  
 Each burns with double hope, with double pain,  
 Tears up the shore, and thunders tow'rd the main.  
 First flew Eumelus on Pheretian steeds ; 455  
 With those of Tros bold Diomed succeeds :

Close on Eumelus' back they puff the wind,  
 And seem just mounting on his car behind;  
 Full on his neck he feels the sultry breeze,  
 And hov'ring o'er, their stretching shadows sees.  
 Then had he lost, or left a doubtful prize: 461  
 But angry Phœbus to Tydides flies,  
 Strikes from his hand the scourge, and renders vain  
 His matchless horses' labour on the plain.  
 Rage fills his eye with anguish to survey 465  
 Snatch'd from his hope, the glories of the day.

v. 458. *And seem just mounting on his car behind.*] A more natural image than this could not be thought of. The poet makes us spectators of the race, we see Diomed pressing upon Eumelus so closely, that his chariot seems to climb the chariot of Eumelus.

v. 465. *Rage fills his eye with anguish, to survey, &c.*] We have seen Diomed surrounded with innumerable dangers, acting in the most perilous scenes of blood and death, yet never shed one tear: and now he weeps on a small occasion, for a mere trifle. This must be ascribed to the nature of mankind, who are often transported with trifles; and there are certain unguarded moments in every man's life; so that he who could meet the greatest dangers with intrepidity, may through anger be betrayed into an indecency. *Eustathius.*

The reason why Apollo is angry at Diomed, according to Eustathius, is because he was interested for Eumelus, whose mares he had fed, when he served Admetus; but I fancy he is under a mistake: this indeed is a reason why he should favour Eumelus, but not why he should be angry at Diomed. I rather think that the quarrel of



The fraud celestial Pallas sees with pain,  
 Springs to her knight, and gives the scourge again  
 And fills his steeds with vigour. At a stroke,  
 She breaks his rival's chariot from the yoke ; 470  
 No more their way the startled horses held ;  
 The car revers'd came ratt'ling on the field ;  
 Shot headlong from his seat, beside the wheel,  
 Prone on the dust th' unhappy master fell ; 474  
 His batter'd face and elbows strike the ground ;  
 Nose, mouth, and front, one undistinguish'd wound ;  
 Grief stops his voice, a torrent drowns his eyes ;  
 Before him far the glad Tydides flies ;  
 Minerva's spirit drives his matchless pace,  
 And crowns him victor of the labour'd race. 480

The next, tho' distant, Menelaüs succeeds ;  
 While thus young Nestor animates his steeds.  
 Now, now, my gen'rous pair, exert your force ;  
 Not that we hope to match Tydides' horse,

Apollo with Diomed was personal : because he offered him a violence in the fifth book, and Apollo still resents it.

The fiction of Minerva's assisting Diomed is grounded upon his being so wise as to take a couple of whips to prevent any mischance : so that Wisdom, or Pallas, may be said to lend him one. *Eustathius*.

v. 483. *The speech of Antilochus to his horses.*] I fear Antilochus's speech to his horses is blameable ; Eustathius himself seems to think it a fault that he should speak so much in the very heat of the race. He commands and soothes, counsels and threatens his horses, as if they were reasonable creatures. The subsequent speech of Mene-

Book XXIII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 133

Since great Minerva wings their rapid way, 485

And gives their lord the honours of the day,

But reach Atrides ! shall his mare out-go

Your swiftnefs ? vanquish'd by a female foe ?

Thro' your neglect, if lagging on the plain

The last ignoble gift be all we gain ; 490

No more shall Nestor's hand your food supply,

The old man's fury rises, and ye die.

Haste then ; yon' narrow road, before our fight

Presents th' occasion, could we use it right. 494

Thus he. The courfers at their master's threat

With quicker steps the sounding champain beat.

And now Antilochus with nice survey,

Observes the compass of the hollow way.

'Twas where by force of wint'ry torrents torn,

Fast by the road a precipice was worn : 500

Here, where but one could pass to shun the throng

The Spartan hero's chariot smok'd along.

Close up the vent'rous youth resolves to keep,

Still edging near, and bears him tow'rd the steep.

Atrides, trembling casts his eye below, 505

And wonders at the rashness of his foe.

Hold, stay your steeds—What madness thus to ride

This narrow way ; take larger field (he cry'd)

laus is more excusable as it is more short, but both of them are spoken in a passion, and anger we know makes us speak to every thing, and we discharge it upon the most senseless objects.

Or both must fall—Atrides cry'd in vain ;  
 He flies more fast, and throws up all the rein. 510  
 Far as an able arm the disk can send,  
 When youthful rivals their full force extend,  
 So far, Antilochus ! thy chariot flew  
 Before the king : he, cautious, backward drew  
 His horse compell'd ; foreboding in his fears 515  
 The rattling ruin of the clashing cars,  
 The flound'ring courfers rolling on the plain,  
 And conquest lost thro' frantick haste to gain.  
 But thus upbraids his rival as he flies ;  
 Go, furious youth ! ungen'rous and unwise ! 520  
 Go, but expect not I'll the prize resign ;  
 Add perjury to fraud, and make it thine—  
 Then to his steeds with all his force he cries ;  
 Be swift, be vig'rous, and regain the prize !  
 Your rivals, destitute of youthful force, 525  
 With fainting knees shall labour in the course,  
 And yield the glory yours—The steeds obey ;  
 Already at their heels they wing their way,  
 And seem already to retrieve the day. }  
 Meantime the Grecians in a ring beheld 530  
 The courfers bounding o'er the dusty field.  
 The first who mark'd them was the Cretan king ;  
 High on a rising-ground, above the ring,  
 The monarch sat : from whence with sure survey  
 He well observ'd the chief who led the way, 535  
 And heard from far his animating cries,  
 And saw the foremost steed with sharpen'd eyes ;

Book XXIII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 135

On whose broad front, a blaze of shining white  
Like the full moon, stood obvious to the fight.  
He saw ; and rising, to the Greeks begun. 540  
Are yonder horse discern'd by me alone?  
Or can ye, all, another chief survey,  
And other steeds, than lately led the way?  
Those, tho' the swiftest, by some God with-held,  
Lie sure disabled in the middle field : 545  
For since the goal they doubled, round the plain  
I search to find them, but I search in vain.  
Perchance the reins forsook the driver's hand,  
And, turn'd too short, he tumbled on the strand,  
Shot from the chariot ; while his coursers stray  
With frantick fury from the destin'd way. 551  
Rise then some other, and inform my fight,  
(For these dim eyes, perhaps, discern not right)  
Yet sure he seems, (to judge by shape and air,)  
The great Ætolian chief, renown'd in war. 555  
Old man ! (Oileus rashly thus replies)  
Thy tongue too hastily confers the prize ;  
Of those who view the course, not sharpest ey'd,  
Nor youngest, yet the readiest to decide.  
Eumelus' steeds high-bounding in the chace, 560  
Still, as at first, unrivall'd lead the race,  
I well discern him as he shakes the rein,  
And hear his shouts victorious o'er the plain.



Thus he. Idomeneus incens'd rejoin'd :  
 Barb'rous of words! and arrogant of mind! 565

v. 565. *The dispute between Idomeneus and Ajax.*] Nothing could be more naturally imagined than this contention at a horse-race: the leaders were divided into parties, and each was interested for his friend: the poet has a two-fold design, not only to embellish and diversify his poem by such natural circumstances, but also to shew us, as Eustathius observes, from the conduct of Ajax, that passionate men betray themselves into follies, and are themselves guilty of the faults of which they accuse others.

It is with a particular decency that Homer makes Achilles the arbitrator between Idomeneus and Ajax: Agamemnon was his superiour in the army, but as Achilles exhibited the shows, he was the proper judge of any difference that should arise about them. Had the contest been between Ajax and Idomeneus, considered as soldiers, the cause must have been brought before Agamemnon; but as they are to be considered as spectators of the games, they ought to be determined by Achilles.

It may not be unnecessary just to observe to the reader the judiciousness of Homer's conduct in making Achilles exhibit the games, and not Agamemnon: Achilles is the hero of the poem, and consequently must be the chief actor in all the great scenes of it: he had remained inactive during a great part of the poem, yet the poet makes his very inactivity contribute to the carrying on the design of his Ilias: and to supply his absence from many of the busy scenes of the preceding parts of it, he now in the conclusion makes him almost the sole agent: by these means he leaves a noble idea of his hero upon the mind of his reader; as he raised our expectations when he brought him upon the stage of action, so he makes him go off with the utmost pomp and applause.

Contentious prince, of all the Greeks beside  
The last in merit, as the first in pride :  
To vile reproach what answer can we make?  
A goblet or a tripod let us stake, 569  
And be the king the judge. The most unwise  
Will learn their rashness, when they pay the price.

He said : and Ajax by mad passion borne,  
Stern had reply'd ; fierce scorn enhancing scorn  
To fell extremes. But Thetis' god-like son  
Awful amidst them rose, and thus begun. 575

Forbear, ye chiefs ! reproachful to contend ;  
Much would ye blame, should others thus offend : }  
And lo ! th' approaching steeds your contest end.  
No sooner had he spoke, but thund'ring near,  
Drives, thro' a stream of dust the charioteer. : 580  
High o'er his head the circling lash he wields ;  
His bounding horses scarcely touch the fields :  
His car amidst the dusty whirlwind roll'd,  
Bright with the mingled blaze of tin and gold,

v. 581. *High o'er his head the circling lash he wields.*] I am persuaded that the common translation of the word *καταμαδδν*, in the original of this verse, is faulty : it is rendered, *he lashed the horses continually over the shoulders* ; whereas I fancy it should be translated thus, *assiduè (equos) agitabat scutica ab humero ducta*. This naturally expresses the very action, and whirl of the whip over the driver's shoulder, in the act of lashing the horses, and agrees with the use of the same word in the 431st line of this book in the original, where *ἔφα δίκην καταμαδδν* must be translated *jactus disci ab humero vibrati*.

Refulgent thro' the cloud ; no eye could find 585  
 The track his flying wheels had left behind :  
 And the fierce coursers urg'd their rapid pace  
 So swift, it seem'd a flight, and not a race.  
 Now victor at the goal Tydides stands, 589  
 Quits his bright car, and springs upon the sands ;  
 From the hot steeds the sweaty torrents stream ;  
 The well-ply'd whip is hung athwart the beam :  
 With joy brave Sthenelus receives the prize,  
 The tripod-vase, and dame with radiant eyes :  
 These to the ships his train triumphant leads, 595  
 The chief himself unyokes the panting steeds.

Young Nestor follows (who by art, not force,  
 O'er-past Atrides) second in the course.  
 Behind, Atrides urg'd the race, more near  
 Than to the courser in his swift career 600  
 The following car, just touching with his heel  
 And brushing with his tail the whirling wheel :  
 Such, and so narrow now the space between  
 The rivals, late so distant on the green ;  
 So soon swift Æthe her lost ground regain'd, 605  
 One length, one moment, had the race obtain'd.

Merion pursu'd, at greater distance still,  
 With tardier coursers, and inferiour skill.  
 Last came, Admetus ! thy unhappy son ; 609  
 Slow dragg'd the steeds his batter'd chariot on :  
 Achilles saw, and pitying thus begun.

Behold ! the man whose matchless art surpass  
 The sons of Greece ! the ablest, yet the last !

Fortune denies, but justice bids us pay  
(Since great Tydides bears the first away) 615 }  
To him, the second honours of the day.

The Greeks consent with loud applauding cries,  
And then Eumelus had receiv'd the prize,  
But youthful Nestor, jealous of his fame,  
Th' award opposes, and asserts his claim. 620  
Think not (he cries) I tamely will resign,  
O Peleus' son! the mare so justly mine.  
What if the Gods, the skilful to confound,  
Have thrown the horse and horseman to the ground?  
Perhaps he sought not Heav'n by sacrifice, 625  
And vows omitted forfeited the prize.  
If yet, (distinction to thy friend to show,  
And please a soul desirous to bestow,)  
Some gift must grace Eumelus; view thy store  
Of beauteous handmaids, steeds, and shining ore,  
An ample present let him thence receive, 631  
And Greece shall praise thy gen'rous thirst to give.

v. 614. *Fortune denies, but justice, &c.*] Achilles here intends to shew, that it is not just, fortune should rule over virtue, but that a brave man who had performed his duty, and who did not bring upon himself his misfortune, ought to have the recompence he has deserved: and this principle is just, provided we do not reward him at the expence of another's right: Eumelus is a Thessalian, and it is probable Achilles has a partiality to his countryman. *Dacier.*



But this my prize, I never shall forego:

This, who but touches, warriors! is my foe.

Thus spake the youth; nor did his words offend;  
Pleas'd with the well-turn'd flatt'ry of a friend, 636  
Achilles smil'd: the gift propos'd (he cry'd)  
Antilochus! we shall ourself provide.

With plates of brass the corselet cover'd o'er,  
(The same renown'd Asteropæus wore) 640

Whose glitt'ring margins rais'd with silver shine;  
(No vulgar gift) Eumelus, shall be thine.

He said: Automedon at his command

The corselet brought, and gave it to his hand.

Distinguish'd by his friend, his bosom glows 645

With gen'rous joy: then Menelaüs rose;

The herald plac'd the sceptre in his hands,

And still'd the clamour of the shouting bands.

v. 633. *But this my prize, I never shall forego.*—] There is an air of bravery in this discourse of Antilochus: he speaks with the generosity of a gallant soldier, and prefers his honour to his interest; he tells Achilles if he pleases he may make Eumelus a richer present than his prize; he is not concerned for the value of it; but as it was the reward of victory, he would not resign it, because that would be an acknowledgment that Eumelus deserved it.

The character of Antilochus is admirably sustained through this whole episode; he is a very sensible man, but transported with youthful heat, and ambitious of glory: his rashness in driving so furiously against Menelaus must be imputed to this; but his passions being gratified by the conquest in the race, his reason again returns, he owns his error, and is full of resignation to Menelaus.

Not without cause incens'd at Nestor's son,  
 And inly grieving, thus the king begun : 650  
 The praise of wisdom, in thy youth obtain'd,  
 An act so rash (Antilochus) has stain'd.  
 Robb'd of my glory and my just reward,  
 To you, O Grecians ! be my wrong declar'd :  
 So not a leader shall our conduct blame, 655  
 Or judge me envious of a rival's fame.  
 But shall not we, ourselves, the truth maintain ?  
 What needs appealing in a fact so plain ?  
 What Greek shall blame me, if I bid thee rise,  
 And vindicate by oath th' ill-gotten prize ? 660  
 Rise if thou dar'st, before thy chariot stand,  
 The driving scourge high-lifted in thy hand ;  
 And touch thy steeds, and swear, thy whole intent  
 Was but to conquer, not to circumvent.  
 Swear by that God whose liquid arms surround 665  
 The globe, and whose dread earthquakes heave the  
 ground.

The prudent chief with calm attention heard ;  
 Then mildly thus : Excuse, if youth have err'd ;  
 Superiour as thou art, forgive th' offence,  
 Nor I thy equal, or in years, or sense. 670  
 Thou know'st the errours of unripen'd age,  
 Weak are its counsels, headlong is its rage.

v. 663. *And touch thy steeds, and swear—*] It is evident, says Eustathius, from hence, that all fraud was forbid in this chariot race ; but it is not very plain what unlawful deceit Antilochus used against Menelaus : perhaps Antilochus in his haste had declined from the race-ground, and

The prize I quit, if thou thy wrath resign ;  
 The mare, or aught thou ask'st, be freely thine :  
 E'er I become (from thy dear friendship torn) 675  
 Hateful to thee, and to the Gods forsworn.

So spoke Antilochus: and at the word  
 The mare contested to the king restor'd.  
 Joy swells his soul : as when the vernal grain  
 Lifts the green ear above the springing plain, 680  
 The fields their vegetable life renew,  
 And laugh and glitter with the morning dew ;  
 Such joy the Spartan's shining face o'erspread  
 And lifted his gay heart, while thus he said.

Still may our souls, O gen'rous youth ! agree,  
 'Tis now Atrides' turn to yield to thee. 686

avoided some of the uneven places of it, and consequently took an unfair advantage of his adversary ; or perhaps his driving so furiously against Menelaus, as to endanger both their chariots and their lives, might be reckoned foul play ; and therefore Antilochus refuses to take the oath.

v. 679. *Joy swells his soul: as when the vernal grain, &c.* Eustathius is very large in the explication of this similitude, which at the first view seems obscure : his words are these,

As the dew raises the blades of corn, that are for want of it weak and depressed, and by pervading the pores of the corn animates and makes it flourish, so did the behaviour of Antilochus raise the dejected mind of Menelaus, exalt his spirits, and restore him to a full satisfaction.

I have given the reader his interpretation, and translated it with the liberty of poetry : it is very much in the language of Scripture, and in the spirit of the orientals.

Rash heat perhaps a moment might controul,  
 Not break, the settled temper of thy soul.  
 Not but (my friend) 'tis still the wiser way  
 To wave contention with superiour sway ; 690  
 For ah ! how few, who should like thee offend,  
 Like thee, have talents to regain the friend ?  
 To plead indulgence, and thy fault atone,  
 Suffice thy father's merit and thy own :  
 Gen'rous alike, for me, the fire and son 695  
 Have greatly suffer'd, and have greatly done.  
 I yield ; that all may know, my soul can bend,  
 Nor is my pride preferr'd before my friend.

He said ; and, pleas'd his passion to command,  
 Resign'd the courser to Noëman's hand, 700  
 Friend of the youthful chief : himself content,  
 The shining charger to his vessel sent.  
 The golden talents Merion next obtain'd ;  
 The fifth reward, the double bowl, remain'd.  
 Achilles this to rev'rend Nestor bears, 705  
 And thus the purpose of his gift declares.

Accept thou this, O sacred fire ! (he said)  
 In dear memorial of Patroclus dead ;

v. 707. *Accept thou this, O sacred fire !*] The poet in my opinion preserves a great deal of decency towards this old hero and venerable counsellor : he gives him an honorary reward for his superiour wisdom, and therefore calls it *αἶθρον*, and not *δῶρον*, a prize, and not a present. The moral of Homer is, that princes ought no less to honour and recompense those who excel in wisdom and counsel, than those who are capable of actual service.



Dead, and for ever lost Patroclus lies,  
For ever snatch'd from our desiring eyes ! 710

Take thou this token of a grateful heart,  
Tho' 'tis not thine to hurl the distant dart,  
The quoit to toss, the pond'rous mace to wield,  
Or urge the race, or wrestle on the field.

Thy pristine vigour age has overthrown, 715  
But left the glory of the past thy own.

He said, and plac'd the goblet at his side ;  
With joy, the venerable king reply'd.

Wisely and well, my son, thy words have prov'd  
A senior honour'd, and a friend belov'd ! 720

Achilles, perhaps, had a double view in paying him this respect, not only out of deference to his age, and wisdom, but also because he had in a manner won the prize by the advice he gave his son ; so that Nestor may be said to have conquered in the person of Antilochus. *Eustathius*.

v. 719. *Nestor's speech to Achilles.*] This speech is admirably well adapted to the character of Nestor: he aggrandizes, with an infirmity peculiar to age, his own exploits ; and one would think Horace had him in his eye,

“ — — — — Laudator temporis acti

“ Se puero” — —

Neither is it any blemish to the character of Nestor thus to be a little talkative about his own achievements : to have described him otherwise, would have been an outrage to human nature, in as much as the wisest man living is not free from the infirmities of man ; and as every stage of life has some imperfection peculiar to itself.

————— “Ο μὲν ἔμπεδον ἠνιόχευεν.

————— “Ἐμπεδον ἠνιόχευ.

Too true it is, deserted of my strength,  
These wither'd arms and limbs have fail'd at length.

The reader may observe that the old man takes abundance of pains to give reasons how his rivals came to be victors in the chariot-race: he is very solicitous to make it appear that it was not through any want of skill or power in himself: and in my opinion Nestor is never more vain-glorious, than in this recital of his own disappointment.

It is for the same reason he repeats the words I have cited above: he obtrudes (by that repetition) the disadvantages under which he laboured, upon the observation of the reader, for fear he should impute the loss of the victory to his want of skill.

Nestor says that these Muliones overpowered him by their *numbers*. The critics, as Eustathius remarks, have laboured hard to explain this difficulty; they tell us a formal story, that when Nestor was ready to enter the lists against these brothers, he objected against them as unfair adversaries, (for it must be remembered that they were monsters that grew together, and consequently had four hands to Nestor's two) but the judges would not allow his plea, but determined, that as they grew together, so they ought to be considered as one man.

Others tell us that they brought several chariots into the lists, whose charioteers combined together in favour of Eurytus and Cteatus, these brother-monsters.

Others say, that the multitude of the spectators conspired to disappoint Nestor.

I thought it necessary to give my reader these several conjectures that he might understand why Nestor says he was overpowered by *πλῆθει*, or *numbers*; and also, because it confirms my former observation, that Nestor is very careful to draw his own picture in the strongest colours, and to shew it in the fairest light.

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Oh! had I now that force I felt of yore,  
 Known thro' Buprasium and the Pylian shore !  
 Victorious then in ev'ry solemn game, 725  
 Ordain'd to Amarynces' mighty name ;  
 The brave Epeians gave my glory way,  
 Ætolians, Pylians, all resign the day.  
 I quell'd Clytomedes in fights of hand,  
 And backward hurl'd Ancæus on the sand, 730  
 Surpass'd Iphycus in the swift career,  
 Phyleus and Polydorus, with the spear.  
 The sons of Actor won the prize of horse,  
 But won by numbers, not by art or force :  
 For the fam'd twins, impatient to survey 735  
 Prize after prize by Nestor borne away,  
 Sprung to their car ; and with united pains  
 One lash'd the courfers, while one rul'd the  
 reins.

Such once I was ! Now to these tasks succeeds  
 A younger race, that emulate our deeds : 740  
 I yield alas ! (to age who must not yield ?)  
 Tho' once the foremost hero of the field.  
 Go thou, my son ! by gen'rous friendship led,  
 With martial honours decorate the dead ;  
 While pleas'd I take the gift thy hands present, 745  
 (Pledge of benevolence, and kind intent)  
 Rejoic'd, of all the num'rous Greeks, to see  
 Not one but honours sacred age and me :  
 Those due distinctions thou so well can'st pay,  
 May the just Gods return another day. 750

Proud of the gift, thus spake the full of days :  
Achilles heard him, prouder of the praise.

The prizes next are order'd to the field,  
For the bold champions who the caëstus wield.  
A stately mule, as yet by toils unbroke, 755  
Of six years age, unconscious of the yoke,  
Is to the Circus led, and firmly bound ;  
Next stands a goblet, massy, large, and round.  
Achilles rising thus : Let Greece excite  
Two heroes equal to this hardy fight ; 760  
Who dare the foe with lifted arms provoke,  
And rush beneath the long-descending stroke.  
On whom Apollo shall the palm bestow,  
And whom the Greeks supreme by conquest know,  
This mule his dauntless labours shall repay ; 765  
The vanquish'd bear the massy bowl away.

This dreadful combat great Epëus chose ;  
High o'er the croud, enormous bulk ! he rose,  
And seiz'd the beast, and thus began to say :  
Stand forth some man, to bear the bowl away ! 770  
(Price of his ruin :) for who dares deny  
This mule my right ; th' undoubted victor I ?  
Others, 'tis own'd, in fields of battle shine,  
But the first honours of this fight are mine ;  
For who excels in all ? Then let my foe 775  
Draw near, but first his certain fortune know,  
Secure, this hand shall his whole frame confound,  
Mash all his bones, and all his body pound :



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So let his friends be nigh, a needful train  
To heave the batter'd carcase off the plain. 780

The giant spoke; and in a stupid gaze  
The host beheld him, silent with amaze!  
'Twas thou, Euryalus! who durst aspire  
To meet his might, and emulate thy fire,  
The great Mecistheus; who in days of yore 785

In Theban games the noblest trophy bore,  
(The games ordain'd dead Oedipus to grace)  
And singly vanquish'd the Cadmæan race.

Him great Tydides urges to contend,  
Warm with the hopes of conquest for his friend;  
Officious with the cincture girds him round; 791  
And to his wrist the gloves of death are bound.

Amid the circle now each champion stands,  
And poises high in air his iron hands;  
With clashing gauntlets now they fiercely close,  
'Their crackling jaws re-echo to the blows, 796 }  
And painful sweat from all their members flows.

At length Epæus dealt a weighty blow,  
Full on the cheek of his unwary foe;  
Beneath that pond'rous arm's resistless sway 800  
Down dropt he, nerveless, and extended lay.

As a large fish, when winds and waters roar,  
By some huge billow dash'd against the shore,  
Lies panting: not less batter'd with his wound,  
'The bleeding hero pants upon the ground. 805

To rear his fallen foe, the victor lends  
Scornful, his hand; and gives him to his friends;

Whose arms support him, reeling thro' the throng,  
And dragging his disabled legs along ;  
Nodding, his head hangs down his shoulder  
o'er ; 810

His mouth and nostrils pour the clotted gore ;  
Wrapt round in mists he lies, and lost to thought ;  
His friends receive the bowl, too dearly bought.

The third bold game Achilles next demands,  
And calls the wrestlers to the level sands : 815  
A massy tripod for the victor lies,  
Of twice six oxen its reputed price ;  
And next, the loser's spirits to restore,  
A female captive, valu'd but at four.  
Scarce did the chief the vig'rous strife propose,  
When tow'r-like Ajax and Ulysses rose. 821  
Amid the ring each nervous rival stands,  
Embracing rigid with implicit hands :

v. 819. *A female captive, valu'd but at four.*] I cannot in civility neglect a remark upon this passage by Madam Dacier, who highly resents the affront put upon her sex by the ancients, who set (it seems) thrice the value upon a *tripod* as upon a beautiful female slave : nay, she is afraid the value of women is not raised even in our days ; for she says there are curious persons now living, who had rather have a true antique kettle, than the finest woman alive : I confess I entirely agree with the lady, and must impute such opinions of the fair sex to want of taste in both ancients and moderns : the reader may remember that these tripods were of no use, but made entirely for show ; and consequently the most satirical critick could only say, the woman and *tripod* ought to have borne an equal value.

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Close lock'd above, their heads and arms are mixt ;  
 Below, their planted feet, at distance fixt : 825  
 Like two strong rafters which the builder forms  
 Proof to the wint'ry wind and howling storms,  
 Their tops connected, but at wider space  
 Fixt on the center stands their solid base.  
 Now to the grasp each manly body bends ; 830  
 The humid sweat from ev'ry pore descends ;  
 Their bones resound with blows : sides, shoulders,  
 thighs,  
 Swell to each gripe, and bloody tumours rise.  
 Nor could Ulysses, for his art renown'd,  
 O'erturn the strength of Ajax on the ground ; 835  
 Nor could the strength of Ajax overthrow  
 The watchful caution of his artful foe.  
 While the long strife ev'n tir'd the lookers-on,  
 Thus to Ulysses spoke great Telamon.  
 Or let me lift thee, chief, or lift thou me : 840  
 Prove we our force, and Jove the rest decree.

He said ; and straining, heav'd him off the ground  
 With matchless strength ; that time Ulysses found

v. 826. *Like two strong rafters, &c.*] I will give the reader the words of Eustathius upon this similitude, which very happily represents the wrestlers in the posture of wrestling. Their heads leaned one against the other, like the rafters that support the roof of a house ; at the foot they are disjointed, and stand at a greater distance, which naturally paints the attitude of body in these two wrestlers, while they contend for victory.

The strength t' evade, and where the nerves combine  
 His ancle struck : the giant fell supine ; 845  
 Ulysses following, on his bosom lies ;  
 Shouts of applause run rattling thro' the skies.  
 Ajax to lift, Ulysses next essays,  
 He barely stirr'd him, but he could not raise :  
 His knee lock'd fast, the foe's attempt deny'd ; 850  
 And grappling close, they tumbled side by side.  
 Defil'd with honourable dust, they roll,  
 Still breathing strife, and unsubdu'd of soul :  
 Again they rage, again to combat rise ;  
 When great Achilles thus divides the prize. 855

v. 849. *He barely stirr'd him, but he could not raise.*] The poet by this circumstance excellently maintains the character of Ajax, who has all along been described as a strong, unweildy warrior : he is so heavy, that Ulysses can scarce lift him. The words that follow will bear a different meaning, either that Ajax locked his leg within that of Ulysses, or that Ulysses did it. Eustathius observes, that if Ajax gave Ulysses this shock, then he may be allowed to have some appearance of an equality in the contest ; but if Ulysses gave it, then Ajax must be acknowledged to have been folded : but (continues he) it appeared to be otherwise to Achilles, who was the judge of the field, and therefore he gives them an equal prize, because they were equal in the contest.

Madam Dacier misrepresents Eustathius on this place, in saying he thinks it was Ulysses who gave the second stroke to Ajax, whereas it appears by the foregoing note that he rather determines otherwise in consent with the judgment given by Achilles.



Your nobler vigour, oh my friends, restrain ;  
 Nor weary out your gen'rous strength in vain.  
 Ye both have won : let others who excel,  
 Now prove that prowess you have prov'd so well.

The hero's words the willing chiefs obey, 860  
 From their tir'd bodies wipe the dust away,  
 And, cloth'd anew, the following games survey. }

And now succeed the gifts ordain'd to grace  
 The youths contending in the rapid race.  
 A silver urn that full six measures held, 865

By none in weight or workmanship excell'd ;  
 Sidonian artists taught the frame to shine,  
 Elaborate, with artifice divine ;

Whence Tyrian sailors did the prize transport,  
 And gave to Thoas at the Lemnian port : 870  
 From him descended good Eunæus heir'd

The glorious gift ; and, for Lycaon spar'd, }  
 To brave Patroclus gave the rich reward.

Now, the same hero's funeral rites to grace,  
 It stands the prize of swiftness in the race. 875

A well-fed ox was for the second plac'd ;  
 And half a talent must content the last.

Achilles rising then bespoke the train : }  
 Who hope the palm of swiftness to obtain,  
 Stand forth, and bear these prizes from the plain. }

The hero said, and starting from his place, 881

Oïlean Ajax rises to the race ;  
 Ulysses next ; and he whose speed surpass  
 His youthful equals, Nestor's son the last,

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Rang'd in a line the ready racers stand ; 885  
 Pelides points the barrier with his hand ;  
 All start at once ; Oileus led the race ;  
 The next Ulysses, meas'ring pace with pace ;  
 Behind him, diligently close, he sped,  
 As closely following as the running thread 890  
 The spindle follows, and displays the charms  
 Of the fair spinster's breast, and moving arms :  
 Graceful in motion thus, his foe he plies,  
 And treads each footstep e'er the dust can rise :  
 His glowing breath upon his shoulders plays ; 895  
 Th' admiring Greeks loud acclamations raise,  
 To him they give their wishes, hearts, and eyes,  
 And send their souls before him as he flies.  
 Now three times turn'd in prospect of the goal,  
 The panting chief to Pallas lifts his soul : 900  
 Assist, O Goddess ! (thus in thought he pray'd)  
 And present at his thought, descends the Maid.  
 Buoy'd by her heav'nly force, he seems to swim,  
 And feels a pinion lifting ev'ry limb.

v. 901. *Assist, O Goddess ! (thus in thought he pray'd.)*  
 Nothing could be better adapted to the present circumstance of Ulysses than this prayer: it is short, and ought to be so, because the time would not allow him to make a longer ; nay he prefers this petition mentally, ἐν νηὶ δρυμῶν; all his faculties are so bent upon the race, that he does not call off his attention from it, even to speak so short a petition as seven words, which comprehend the whole of it ; such passages as these are instances of great judgment in the poet.

All fierce, and ready now the prize to gain, 905  
 Unhappy Ajax stumbles on the plain ;  
 (O'erturn'd by Pallas) where the slipp'ry shore  
 Was clogg'd with slimy dung, and mingled gore.  
 (The self-same place beside Patroclus' pyre,  
 Where late the slaughter'd victims fed the fire) 910  
 Besmear'd with filth, and blotted o'er with clay,  
 Obscene to fight, the rueful racer lay ;  
 The well-fed bull (the second prize) he shar'd,  
 And left the urn Ulysses' rich reward.  
 Then, grasping by the horn the mighty beast, 915  
 The baffled hero thus the Greeks address.

Accursed fate ! the conquest I forego ;  
 A mortal I, a Goddess was my foe ;  
 She urg'd her fav'rite on the rapid way,  
 And Pallas, not Ulysses, won the day. 920

Thus sourly wail'd he, sputt'ring dirt and gore,  
 A burst of laughter echo'd thro' the shore,  
 Antilochus, more hum'rous than the rest,  
 Takes the last prize, and takes it with a jest.

Why with our wiser elders should we strive ? 925  
 The Gods still love them, and they always thrive.

v. 924. *And takes it with a jest.*] Antilochus comes off very well, and wittily prevents raillery ; by attributing the victory of his rivals to the protection which the Gods gave to age. By this he insinuates, that he has something to comfort himself with ; (for youth is better than the prize) and that he may pretend hereafter to the same protection, since it is a privilege of seniority. *Dacier.*

Ye see, to Ajax I must yield the prize :  
 He to Ulysses, still more aged and wise ;  
 (A green old age unconscious of decays,  
 That prove the hero born in better days !) 930

Behold his vigour in this active race !  
 Achilles only boasts a swifter pace :  
 For who can match Achilles ? He who can,  
 Must yet be more than hero, more than man.

Th' effect succeeds the speech. Pelides cries, 935  
 Thy artful praise deserves a better prize.  
 Nor Greece in vain shall hear thy friend extoll'd ;  
 Receive a talent of the purest gold.

The youth departs content. The host admire  
 The son of Nestor, worthy of his fire. 940

Next these a buckler, spear, and helm, he brings ;  
 Cast on the plain, the brazen burthen rings :

v. 933. *For who can match Achilles ?*] There is great art in these transient compliments to Achilles : that hero could not possibly shew his own superiority in these games by contending for any of the prizes, because he was the exhibiter of the sports : but Homer has found out a way to give him the victory in two of them. In the chariot-race Achilles is represented as being able to conquer every opponent, and though he speaks it himself, the poet brings it in so happily, that he speaks it without any indecency : and in this place Antilochus with a very good grace tells Achilles, that in the foot-race no one can dispute the prize with him. Thus though Diomed and Ulysses conquer in the chariot and foot-race, it is only because Achilles is not their antagonist.



Arms, which of late divine Sarpedon wore,  
 And great Patroclus in short triumph bore.  
 Stand forth the bravest of our host ! (he cries) 945  
 Whoever dares deserve so rich a prize,  
 Now grace the lifts before our army's fight,  
 And sheath'd in steel, provoke his foe to fight.  
 Who first the jointed armour shall explore,  
 And stain his rival's mail with issuing gore ; 950  
 The sword, Asteropæus possess of old,  
 (A Thracian blade, distinct with studs of gold)  
 Shall pay the stroke, and grace the striker's side :  
 These arms in common let the chiefs divide :  
 For each brave champion, when the combat ends,  
 A sumptuous banquet at our tent attends. 956

v. 949. *Who first the jointed armour shall explore.*] Some of the ancients have been shocked at this combat, thinking it a barbarity that men in sport should thus contend for their lives ; and therefore Aristophanes the Grammarian made this alteration in the verses ;

Ὅππότερός κεν πρώτῳ ἐπιείδῃας χροῖα καλὸν  
 φθῆν' ἐπενζάμεν' δια δ' ἔνισα, &c.

But it is evident that they entirely mistook the meaning and intention of Achilles ; for he that gave the first wound was to be accounted the victor. How could Achilles promise to entertain them both in his tent after the combat, if he intended that one of them should fall in it ? This duel therefore was only a trial of skill, and as such single combats were frequent in the wars of those ages against adversaries, so this was proposed only to shew the dexterity of the combatants in that exercise. *Eustathius.*

Fierce at the word, uprose great Tydeus' son,  
 And the huge bulk of Ajax Telamon.  
 Clad in refulgent steel, on either hand,  
 The dreadful chiefs amid the circle stand : 960  
 Low'ring they meet, tremendous to the fight ;  
 Each Argive bosom beats with fierce delight.  
 Oppos'd in arms not long they idly stood,  
 But thrice they clos'd, and thrice the charge renew'd.  
 A furious pass the spear of Ajax made 965  
 Thro' the broad shield, but at the corslet stay'd :  
 Not thus the foe : his jav'lin aim'd above  
 The buckler's margin, at the neck he drove.  
 But Greece now trembling for her hero's life,  
 Bade share the honours, and surcease the strife. 970  
 Yet still the victor's due Tydides gains,  
 With him the sword and studded belt remains.

Then hurl'd the hero, thund'ring on the ground  
 A mass of iron, (an enormous round) 974

v. 971. *Yet still the victor's due Tydides gains.*] Achilles in this place acts the part of a very just arbitrator ; though the combat did not proceed to a full issue, yet Diomed had evidently the advantage, and consequently ought to be rewarded as victor, because he would have been victorious, had not the Greeks interposed.

I could have wished that the poet had given Ajax the prize in some of these contests. He undoubtedly was a very gallant soldier, and has been described as repulsing a whole army : yet in all these sports he is foiled. But perhaps the poet had a double view in this representation, not only to shew, that strength without conduct is usually unsuccessful, but also his design might be to compliment

Whose weight and size the circling Greeks admire,  
 Rude from the furnace, and but shap'd by fire.  
 This mighty quoit Aëtion wont to rear,  
 And from his whirling arm dismiss in air :  
 The giant by Achilles slain, he stow'd  
 Among his spoils this memorable load. 980  
 For this, he bids those nervous artists vie,  
 That teach the disk to sound along the sky.  
 Let him whose might can hurl this bowl, arise,  
 Who farthest hurls it, take it as his prize :  
 If he be one, enrich'd with large domain 985  
 Of downs for flocks, and arable for grain,  
 Small stock of iron needs that man provide;  
 His hinds and swains whole years shall be supply'd

the Greeks his countrymen ; by shewing that this Ajax,  
 who had repelled a whole army of Trojans, was not able  
 to conquer any one of the Grecian worthies : for we find  
 him overpowered in three of these exercises.

v. 985. *If he be one, enrich'd, &c.*] The poet in this  
 place speaks in the simplicity of ancient times : the pro-  
 digious weight and size of the quoit is described with a  
 noble plainness, peculiar to the oriental way, and agree-  
 able to the manners of those heroick ages. He does not  
 set down the quantity of this enormous piece of iron,  
 neither as to its bigness nor weight, but as to the use it  
 will be of to him who shall gain it. We see from hence,  
 that the ancients in the prizes they propos'd, had in view  
 not only the honourable, but the useful ; a captive for  
 work, a bull for tillage, a quoit for the provision of iron.  
 Besides, it must be remembered, that in those times iron  
 was very scarce ; and a sure sign of this scarcity, is, that  
 their arms were brass. *Eustathius. Dacier.*

From hence : nor ask the neighb'ring city's aid,  
For ploughshares, wheels, and all the rural trade.

Stern Polypœtes stept before the throng, 991  
And great Leonteus, more than mortal strong ;  
Whose force with rival forces to oppose,  
Up rose great Ajax ; up Epœus rose.  
Each stood in order : first Epœus threw ; 995  
High o'er the wond'ring crouds the whirling circle  
flew.

Leonteus next a little space surpast,  
And third, the strength of god-like Ajax cast.  
O'er both their marks it flew ; 'till fiercely flung  
From Polypœtes' arm, the discus fung : 1000  
Far, as a swain his whirling sheephook throws,  
That distant falls among the grazing cows,  
So past them all the rapid circle flies :  
His friends (while loud applauses shake the skies) }  
With force conjoin'd heave off the weighty prize. }

Those, who in skilful archery contend, 1006  
He next invites the twanging bow to bend :  
And twice ten axes casts amidst the round,  
(Ten double-edg'd, and ten that singly wound.)  
The mast, which late a first-rate galley bore, 1010  
The hero fixes in the sandy shore ;  
To the tall top a milk-white dove they tie,  
The trembling mark at which their arrows fly.  
Whose weapon strikes yon' flutt'ring bird, shall bear  
These two-edg'd axes, terrible in war ; 1015



The fingle, he, whose shaft divides the cord.  
 He said: experienc'd Merion took the word;  
 And skilful Teucer: in the helm they threw  
 Their lots inscrib'd, and forth the latter flew.  
 Swift from the string the sounding arrow flies; 1020  
 But flies unblest! No grateful sacrifice,  
 No firstling lambs, unheedful! didst thou vow  
 To Phœbus, patron of the shaft and bow.  
 For this, thy well-aim'd arrow, turn'd aside,  
 Err'd from the dove, yet cut the cord that ty'd: 1025  
 A-down the main-mast fell the parted string,  
 And the free bird to heav'n displays her wing:  
 Seas, shores, and skies with loud applause resound,  
 And Merion eager meditates the wound:  
 He takes the bow, directs the shaft above, 1030  
 And following with his eye the soaring dove,

v. 1030. *He takes the bow.*] There having been many editions of Homer, that of Marseilles represents these two rivals in archery as using two bows in the contest; and reads the verses thus,

Σπερχόμεν δ' ἄρα Μηριόνης ἐπέθη κατ' οἷσ' ὄν  
 Τόξω ἐν γὰρ χερσὶν ἔχε πάλαι, ὡς ἴθουν.

Our common editions follow the better alteration of Antimachus, with this only difference, that he reads it

Ἐξείρυσσε Τεύκρῳ τόξον, And they. Ἐξείρυσσε χεῖρὸς τόξον.

It is evident that these archers had but one bow, as they that threw the quoit had but one quoit; by these means the one had no advantage over the other, because both of them shot with the same bow. So that the common reading is undoubtedly the best, where the lines stand thus,

Implores the God to speed it thro' the skies,  
With vows of firsling lambs, and grateful fa-  
crifice.

The dove, in airy circles as she wheels,  
Amid the clouds the piercing arrow feels; 1035  
Quite thro' and thro' the point its passage found,  
And at his feet fell bloody to the ground.

The wounded bird, e'er yet she breath'd her last,  
With flagging wings alighted on the mast,  
A moment hung, and spread her pinions  
there, 1040

Then sudden dropt, and left her life in air.  
From the pleas'd croud new peals of thunder rise,  
And to the ships brave Merion bears the prize.

To close the fun'ral games, Achilles last  
A massy spear amid the circle plac'd, 1045  
And ample charger of un sullied frame,  
With flow'rs high-wrought, not blacken'd yet by  
flame.

Σπερχόμενος δ' ἄρα Μερίωνος ἐξείλετο χεῖρας Ὀρ Τεύκευ  
τόξον, ἅτ' αὖθις ἔχεν πάλαι ὡς Ἰθύνει. *Eustathius.*

This Teucer is the most eminent man for archery of any through the whole Iliad, yet he is here excelled by Meriones: and the poet ascribes his miscarriages to the neglect of invoking Apollo, the God of archery; whereas Meriones, who invokes him, is crowned with success. There is an excellent moral in this passage, and the poet would teach us, that without addressing to Heaven we cannot succeed: Meriones does not conquer because he is the better archer, but because he is the better man.

For these he bids the herbes prove their art,  
 Whose dext'rous skill directs the flying dart.  
 Here too great Merion hopes the noble prize ; 1050  
 Nor here disdain'd the king of men to rise.  
 With joy Pelides saw the honour paid,  
 Rose to the monarch, and respectful said.

v. 1051. *Nor here disdain'd the king of men to rise.*] There is an admirable conduct in this passage ; Agamemnon never contended for any of the former prizes, though of much greater value ; so that he is a candidate for this, only to honour Patroclus and Achilles. The decency which the poet uses both in the choice of the game, in which Agamemnon is about to contend, and the giving him the prize without a contest, is very remarkable : the game was a warlike exercise, fit for the general of an army ; the giving him the prize without a contest is a decency judiciously observed, because no one ought to be supposed to excel the general in any military art : Agamemnon does justice to his own character, for whereas he had been represented by Achilles in the opening of the poem as a covetous person, he now puts in for the prize that is of the least value, and generously gives even that to Talthybius. *Eustathius.*

As to this last particular, of Agamemnon's presenting the charger to Talthybius, I cannot but be of a different opinion. It had been an affront to Achilles not to have accepted of his present on this occasion, and I believe the words of Homer,

Ταλθυβίῳ κήρυκε δίδω σκερικαλλές ἄεθλον,

mean no more, than that he put it into the hands of this herald to carry it to his ships ; Talthybius being by his office an attendant upon Agamemnon.

Book XXIII. HOMER's ILIAD. 163

Thee first in virtue, as in pow'r supreme,  
O king of nations ! all thy Greeks proclaim ; 1055  
In every martial game thy worth attest,  
And know thee both their greatest, and their best.  
Take then the prize, but let brave Merion bear  
This beamy jav'lin in thy brother's war.

Pleas'd from the hero's lips his praise to hear,  
The king to Merion gives the brazen spear : 1061  
But, set apart for sacred use, commands  
The glitt'ring charger to Talthybius' hands.



These find in virtue, as in bow's response,  
 O king of nations! All thy power's prodigious;  
 In every martial game, as in bow's skill,  
 And know these hero's high-gifted, and their deed.  
 Take then the prize, for I have Merion seen  
 This beauty, say in his brother's way.  
 Please'd from the hero's bow his prize to have,  
 The king to Merion gives his bow, as I see,  
 But, for merit for his bow, commands  
 The fighting charge to his hands.

## COMPARISON between the GAMES O F HOMER and VIRGIL.

IT will be expected I should here say something tending to a comparison between the games of Homer and those of Virgil. If I may own my private opinion, there is in general more variety of natural incidents, and a more lively picture of natural passions, in the games and persons of Homer. On the other hand, there seems to me more art, contrivance, gradation, and a greater pomp of verse in those of Virgil. The *chariot-race* is that which Homer has most laboured, of which Virgil being sensible, he judiciously avoided the imitation of what he could not improve, and substituted in its place the *naval-course* or *ship-race*. It is in this the Roman poet has employed all his force, as if on set purpose to rival his great master; but it is extremely observable how constantly he keeps Homer in his eye, and is afraid to depart from his very track, even when he had varied the subject itself. Accordingly the accidents of the naval course have a strange resemblance with those of Homer's chariot-race. He could not forbear at the very beginning to draw a part of that description into a simile. Do not we see he has Homer's chariots in his head, by these lines;

“ Non tam præcipites bijugo certamine campum

“ Corripuere, ruuntque effusi carcere currus.

“ Nec sic immixtis aurigæ undantia lora

“ Concussere jugis, pronique in verbera pendent.”

*Æn. v. ver. 144.*

What is the encounter of Cloanthus and Gyas in the strait between the rocks, but the same with that of Menelaus and Antilochus in the hollow way? Had the galley of Sergestus been broken, if the chariot of Eumelus had not been demolished? Or Mnestheus been cast from the helm, had not the other been thrown from his seat? Does not Mnestheus exhort his rowers in the very words Antilochus had used to his horses?

“ Non jam prima peto Mnestheus, neque vincere certo.

“ Quamquam O! sed superent quibus hoc Neptune  
“ dedisti;

“ Extremos pudeat rediisse! hoc vincite, cives,

“ Et prohibete nefas”——

Ἑμῆλον, καὶ Κῳῶν τιλαίνετον ὅτι τάχιστα.

Ἡ τοι μὲν κείνοισιν ἐριζέμεν ὅτι κελεύω

Τυδείδῃσιν ἵπποισι δαίφρονσιν, οἷσιν Ἀθήνη

Νῦν ὄρεξε τάχος ——

Ἴππους δ' Ἀλκείδῃσιν μηχανῆς, μηδὲ λίπυσθον,

Καρπαλίμους, μὴ Κῳῶν ἐλίσχειν καλαχέυῃ

Αἴθῃ Θῆλυς ἔμσα ——

Upon the whole, the description of the sea-race I think has more poetry and majesty, that of the chariots more nature and lively incidents. There is nothing in Virgil so picturesque, so animated, or which so much marks the characters, as the episodes of Antilochus and Menelaus, Ajax and Idomeneus, with that beautiful interposition of old Nestor, (so naturally introduced into an affair where one so little expects him.) On the other side, in Virgil the description itself is nobler; it has something more ostentatiously grand, and seems a spectacle more worthy the presence of princes and great persons.

In three other games we find the Roman poet contending openly with the Grecian. That of the cæstus is in great part a verbal translation: but it must be owned in favour of Virgil, that he has varied from Homer in the

event of the combat with admirable judgment and with an improvement of the moral. Epëus and Dares are described by both poets as vain boasters; but Virgil with more poetical justice punishes Dares for his arrogance, whereas the presumption and pride of Epëus is rewarded by Homer.

On the contrary, in the *foot-race*, I am of opinion that Homer has shewn more judgment and morality than Virgil. Nisus in the latter is unjust to his adversary in favour of his friend Euryalus; so that Euryalus wins the race by a palpable fraud, and yet the poet gives him the first prize; whereas Homer makes Ulysses victorious, purely through the mischance of Ajax, and his own piety in invoking Minerva.

The *shooting* is also a direct copy, but with the addition of two circumstances which make a beautiful gradation. In Homer the first archer cuts the string that held the bird, and the other shoots him as he is mounting. In Virgil the first only hits the mast which the bird was fixed upon, the second cuts the string, the third shoots him, and the fourth to vaunt the strength of his arm directs his arrow up to heaven, where it kindles into a flame, and makes a prodigy. This last is certainly superior to Homer in what they call the *wonderful*: but what is the *intent* or *effect* of this prodigy, or whether a reader is not at least as much surprised at it, as at the most unreasonable parts in Homer, I leave to those criticks who are more inclined to find faults than I am: nor shall I observe upon the many literal imitations in the Roman poet, to object against which were to derogate from the merit of those fine passages, which Virgil was so very sensible of, that he was resolved to take them, at any rate, to himself.

There remain in Homer three games untouched by Virgil; the *wrestling*, the *single combat*, and the *discus*. In Virgil there is only the *Lusus Trojæ* added, which is



purely his own, and must be confest to be inimitable; I do not know whether I may be allowed to say, it is worth all those three of Homer?

I could not forgive myself if I omitted to mention in this place the funeral games in the sixth Thebaid of Statius; it is by much the most beautiful book in that poem. It is very remarkable, that he has followed Homer through the whole course of his games: there is the *chariot-race*, the *foot-race*, the *discus*, the *castus*, the *wrestling*, the *single combat* (which is put off in the same manner as in Homer) and the *shooting*; which last ends (as in Virgil) with a prodigy: yet in the particular descriptions of each of these games this poet has not borrowed from either of his predecessors, and his poem is so much the worse for it.

THE  
A R C U M E N T

THE redemption of the body of Heber.  
**THE**  
THE God of Israel is the redemption of the body of Heber.  
The God of Israel is the redemption of the body of Heber.  
**TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK**

**OF THE**  
**I L I A D.**

THE  
A R G U M E N T.

The redemption of the body of Hector.

*THE Gods deliberate about the redemption of Hector's body. Jupiter sends Thetis to Achilles to dispose him for the restoring it, and Iris to Priam, to encourage him to go in person, and treat for it. The old king, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his queen, makes ready for the journey, to which he is encouraged by an omen from Jupiter. He sets forth in his chariot, with a waggon loaded with presents under the charge of Idæus the herald. Mercury descends in the shape of a young man, and conducts him to the pavilion of Achilles. Their conversation on the way. Priam finds Achilles at his table, casts himself at his feet, and begs for the body of his son; Achilles, moved with compassion, grants his request, detains him one night in his tent, and the next morning sends him home with the body: The Trojans run out to meet him. The lamentations of Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen, with the solemnities of the funeral.*

*The time of twelve days is employed in this book, while the body of Hector lies in the tent of Achilles. And as many more are spent in the truce allowed for his interment. The scene is partly in Achilles's camp, and partly in Troy.*

THE ILLIAD. BOOK XXIV.

THE

## TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK

OF THE

I L I A D.

**N**ow from the finish'd games the Grecian  
band

Seek their black ships, and clear the crouded strand:

All stretch'd at ease the genial banquet share,

And pleasing slumbers quiet all their care.

Not so Achilles: he, to grief resign'd, 5

His friend's dear image present to his mind,

Takes his sad couch, more unobserv'd to weep;

Nor tastes the gifts of all-composing sleep.

Restless he roll'd around his weary bed,

And all his soul on his Patroclus fed: 10

The form so pleasing, and the heart so kind,

That youthful vigour, and that manly mind,



What toils they shar'd, what martial works they wrought,

What seas they measur'd, and what fields they fought;

All past before him in rememb'rance dear, 15

Thought follows thought, and tear succeeds to tear.

v. 14. *What seas they measur'd, &c.*] There is something very noble in these sentiments of Achilles: he does not recollect any soft moments, any tenderness that had passed between him and Patroclus, but he revolves the many difficulties, the toils by land, and the dangers by sea, in which they had been companions: thus the poet on all occasions admirably sustains the character of Achilles: when he played upon the harp in the ninth book, he sung the achievements of kings; and in this place there is an air of greatness in his very sorrows: Achilles is as much a hero when he weeps, as when he fights.

This passage in Homer has not escaped the censure of Plato, who thought it a diminution in his character to be thus transported with grief; but the objection will vanish, if we remember that all the passions of Achilles are in the extreme: his nature is violent, and it would have been an outrage to his general character to have represented him as mourning moderately for his friend. Plato spoke more like a philosopher than a critick when he blamed the behaviour of Achilles as unmanly: these tears would have ill become Plato, but they are graceful in Achilles.

Besides, there is something very instructive in this whole representation, it shews us the power of a sincere friendship, and softens and recommends the character of Achilles; the violence he used towards his enemy is alleviated by the sincerity he expresses towards his friend; he is a terrible enemy, but amiable friend.

Book XXIV. HOMER'S ILIAD. 173

And now supine, now prone, the hero lay,  
 Now shifts his side, impatient for the day :  
 Then starting up, disconsolate he goes  
 Wide on the lonely beach to vent his woes. 20  
 There as the solitary mourner raves,  
 The ruddy morning rises o'er the waves :  
 Soon as it rose, his furious steeds he join'd,  
 The chariot flies, and Hector trails behind.  
 And thrice, Patroclus ! round thy monument. 25  
 Was Hector dragg'd, then hurry'd to the tent.  
 There sleep at last o'ercomes the hero's eyes ;  
 While foul in dust th' unhonour'd carcase lies,  
 But not deserted by the pitying skies. }  
 For Phœbus watch'd it with superiour care, 30  
 Preserv'd from gaping wounds, and tainting air ;  
 And ignominious as it swept the field,  
 Spread o'er the sacred corse his golden shield.  
 All Heav'n was mov'd, and Hermes will'd to go  
 By stealth to snatch him from th' insulting foe: 35

v. 30. *For Phœbus watch'd it, &c.*] Eustathius says, that by this shield of Apollo are meant the clouds that are drawn up by the beams of the sun, which cooling and qualifying the sultriness of the air, preserved the body from decay : but perhaps the poet had something farther in his eye when he introduced Apollo upon this occasion : Apollo is a physician and the God of medicaments ; if therefore Achilles used any arts to preserve Hector from decay, that he might be able the longer to insult his remains, Apollo may properly be said to protect it with his Ægis.

But Neptune this, and Pallas this denies,  
And th' unrelenting Empress of the skies :

v. 36. *But Neptune this, and Pallas this denies.*] It is with excellent art that the poet carries on this part of the poem: he shews that he could have contrived another way to recover the body of Hector, but as a God is never to be introduced but when human means fail, he rejects the interposition of Mercury, makes use of ordinary methods, and Priam redeems his son: this gives an air of probability to the relation, at the same time that it advances the glory of Achilles; for the greatest of his enemies labours to purchase his favour, the Gods hold a consultation, and a king becomes his suppliant. *Eustathius.*

Those seven lines, from κλέψαι δ' αἰτρήσεσθον Μαχλοσύνην ἄλσειόν, have been thought spurious by some of the ancients: they judged it as an indecency that the Goddess of Wisdom and Achilles should be equally inexorable; and that it was below the majesty of the Gods to be said to steal. Besides, say they, had Homer been acquainted with the judgment of Paris, he would undoubtedly have mentioned it before this time in his poem, and consequently that story was of a later invention: and Aristarchus affirms that Μαχλοσύνη is a more modern word, and never known before the time of Hesiod, who uses it when he speaks of the daughters of Prætus; and adds, that it is appropriated to signify the incontinence of women, and cannot be at all applied to men: therefore others read the last verse,

Ἡ οἱ πεχασμένα δῶκε' ἰνόμενη.

These objections are entirely gathered from Eustathius: to which we may add, that Macrobius seems to have been one of those who rejected these verses, since he affirms that our author never mentions the judgment of Paris. It may be answered, that the silence of Homer in the fore-

Book XXIV. HOMER'S ILLIAD. 175

E'er since that day implacable to Troy,  
 What time young Paris, simple shepherd boy,  
 Won by destructive lust (reward obscene) 40  
 Their charms rejected for the Cyprian Queen.  
 But when the tenth celestial morning broke ;  
 To Heav'n assembled, thus Apollo spoke.

Unpitying Pow'rs ! how oft each holy fane  
 Has Hector ting'd with blood of victims slain ! 45  
 And can ye still his cold remains pursue ?  
 Still grudge his body to the Trojans view ?  
 Deny to comfort, mother, son, and fire,  
 The last sad honours of a fun'ral fire ?  
 Is then the dire Achilles all your care ? 50  
 That iron heart, inflexibly severe ;

going part of the poem, as to the judgment of Paris, is no argument that he was ignorant of that story : perhaps he might think it most proper to unfold the cause of the destruction of Troy in the conclusion of the Ilias ; that the reader seeing the wrong done, the punishment of that wrong immediately following, might acknowledge the justice of it.

The same reason will be an answer to the objection relating to the anger of Pallas ; wisdom cannot be satisfied without justice, and consequently Pallas ought not to cease from resentment, till Troy has suffered the deserts of her crimes.

I cannot think that the objection about the word *Μαχ-λοσύνη* is of any weight ; the date of words is utterly uncertain, and as no one has been able to determine the ages of Homer and Hesiod, so neither can any person be assured that such words were not in use in Homer's days.



A lion, not a man, who slaughters wide  
 In strength of rage and impotence of pride;  
 Who hastes to murder with a savage joy,  
 Invades around, and breathes but to destroy. 55  
 Shame is not of his soul; nor understood,  
 The greatest evil and the greatest good.  
 Still for one loss he rages unresign'd,  
 Repugnant to the lot of all mankind;  
 To lose a friend, a brother, or a son, 60  
 Heav'n deems each mortal, and its will is done:  
 A while they sorrow, then dismiss their care;  
 Fate gives the wound, and man is born to bear.  
 But this insatiate the commission giv'n  
 By fate, exceeds; and tempts the wrath of Heav'n:  
 Lo how his rage dishonest drags along 66  
 Hector's dead earth insensible of wrong!  
 Brave tho' he be, yet by no reason aw'd,  
 He violates the laws of man and God.

v. 52. *A lion, not a man, &c.*] This is a very formal condemnation of the morals of Achilles, which Homer puts into the mouth of a God. One may see from this alone that he was far from designing his hero a virtuous character; yet the poet artfully introduces Apollo in the midst of his reproaches, intermingling the hero's praises with his blemishes: *Brave tho' he be, &c.* Thus what is the real merit of Achilles is distinguished from what is blameable in his character, and we see Apollo or the God of wisdom, is no less impartial than just in his representation of Achilles.

If equal honours by the partial skies 76  
 Are doom'd both heroes, (Juno thus replies)  
 If Thetis' son must no distinction know,  
 Then hear, ye Gods ! the Patron of the Bow.  
 But Hector only boasts a mortal claim :  
 His birth deriving from a mortal dame : 75  
 Achilles of your own æthereal race  
 Springs from a Goddess by a man's embrace ;  
 (A Goddess by ourself to Peleus giv'n,  
 A man divine, and chosen friend of Heav'n.)  
 To grace those nuptials from the bright abode 80  
 Yourself were present ; where this Minstrel-God  
 (Well pleas'd to share the feast,) amid the quire  
 Stood proud to hymn, and tune his youthful lyre.

Then thus the Thund'rer checks th' imperial

Dame : 84

Let not thy wrath the court of Heav'n inflame ;  
 Their merits, not their honours, are the same. }  
 But mine, and ev'ry God's peculiar grace  
 Hector deserves, of all the Trojan race :  
 Still on our shrines his grateful off'rings lay,  
 (The only honours men to Gods can pay) 90  
 Nor ever from our smoking altar cease  
 The pure libation, and the holy feast.  
 Howe'er by stealth to snatch the corse away,  
 We will not : Thetis guards it night and day.  
 But haste, and summon to our courts above 95  
 The azure Queen : let her persuasion move

Her furious son from Priam to receive  
The proffer'd ransom, and the corse to leave.

He added not: and Iris from the skies,  
Swift as a whirlwind on the message flies, 100  
Meteorous the face of Ocean sweeps,  
Refulgent gliding o'er the fable deeps.  
Between where Samos wide his forests spreads,  
And rocky Imbrus lifts its pointed heads,  
Down plung'd the Maid; (the parted waves re-  
found) 105

She plung'd, and instant shot the dark profound.  
As bearing death in the fallacious bait,  
From the bent angle sinks the leaden weight;  
So past the Goddess thro' the closing wave,  
Where Thetis sorrow'd in her secret cave: 110  
There plac'd amidst her melancholy train  
(The blue-hair'd sisters of the sacred main)  
Pensive she sat, revolving fates to come,  
And wept her god-like son's approaching doom.

v. 114. *And wept her god-like son's approaching doom.* These words are very artfully inserted by the poet. The poem could not proceed to the death of Achilles without breaking the action; and therefore to satisfy the curiosity of the reader concerning the fate of this great man, he takes care to inform us that his life draws to a period, and as it were celebrates his funeral before his death.

Such circumstances as these greatly raise the character of Achilles; he is so truly valiant, that though he knows he must fall before Troy, yet he does not abstain from the war, but courageously meets his death: and here I think

Then thus the Goddess of the painted bow. 115  
 Arise! O Thetis, from thy seats below,  
 'Tis Jove that calls. And why (the Dame replies)  
 Calls Jove his Thetis to the hated skies?  
 Sad object as I am for heav'nly sight!  
 Ah may my sorrows ever shun the light! 120  
 Howe'er, be heav'n's almighty Sire obey'd—  
 She spake, and veil'd her head in sable shade,  
 Which, flowing long, her graceful person clad;  
 And forth she pac'd, majestically sad.

Then thro' the world of waters they repair 125  
 (The way fair Iris led) to upper air.  
 The deeps dividing, o'er the coast they rise,  
 And touch with momentary flight the skies.  
 There in the light'ning's blaze the Sire they found,  
 And all the Gods in shining synod round. 130  
 Thetis approach'd with anguish in her face,  
 (Minerva rising, gave the Mourner place)

it proper to insert an observation that ought to have been made before, which is, that Achilles did not know that Hector was to fall by his hand; if he had known it, where would have been the mighty courage in engaging him in a single combat, in which he was sure to conquer? The contrary of this is evident from the words of Achilles to Hector just before the combat,

— — — Ἦν γ' ἢ ἱταρόν γε παύωλα  
 αἶψα λείπεισσι, &c.  
 I will make no compacts with thee, says Achilles, but one of us shall fall.



Ev'n Juno sought her sorrows to console,  
 And offer'd from her hand the nectar-bowl:  
 She tasted, and resign'd it: then began 135  
 The sacred Sire of Gods and mortal man:

Thou com'st, fair Thetis, but with grief o'ercast;  
 Maternal sorrows; long, ah long to last!  
 Suffice, we know and we partake thy cares:  
 But yield to Fate, and hear what Jove declares.  
 Nine days are past, since all the court above 141  
 In Hector's cause have mov'd the ear of Jove;

v. 141. *Nine days are past, since all the court above, &c.]*  
 It may be thought that so many interpositions of the Gods, such messages from heaven to earth, and down to the seas, are needless machines; and it may be imagined that it is an offence against probability that so many Deities should be employed to pacify Achilles: but I am of opinion that the poet conducts this whole affair with admirable judgment. The poem is now almost at the conclusion, and Achilles is to pass from a state of an almost inexorable resentment to a state of perfect tranquillity; such a change could not be brought about by human means; Achilles is too stubborn to obey any thing less than a God: this is evident from his rejecting the persuasion of the whole Grecian army to return to the battle: so that it appears that this machinery was necessary, and consequently a beauty to the poem.

It may be farther added, that these several incidents proceed from Jupiter: it is by his appointment that so many Gods are employed to attend Achilles. By these means Jupiter fulfils the promise mentioned in the first book, of honouring the son of Thetis, and Homer excellently sustains his character by representing the inexor-

Book XXIV. HOMER'S I L I A D. 181

'Twas voted, Hermes from his god-like foe  
 By stealth should bear him, but we will'd not so :  
 We will, thy son himself the corse restore, 145  
 And to his conquest add this glory more.  
 Then hie thee to him, and our mandate bear ;  
 Tell him he tempts the wrath of Heav'n too far :  
 Nor let him more (our anger if he dread)  
 Vent his mad vengeance on the sacred dead : 150  
 But yield to ransom and the father's pray'r.  
 The mournful father, Iris shall prepare,  
 With gifts to sue ; and offer to his hands  
 Whate'er his honour asks, or heart demands.

His word the silver-footed Queen attends, 155  
 And from Olympus' snowy tops descends.  
 Arriv'd, she heard the voice of loud lament,  
 And echoing groans that shook the lofty tent.  
 His friends prepare the victim, and dispose  
 Repast unheeded, while he vents his woes ; 160

able Achilles as not parting with the body of his mortal enemy, but by the immediate command of Jupiter.

If the poet had conducted these incidents merely by human means, or supposed Achilles to restore the body of Hector entirely out of compassion, the draught had been unnatural, because unlike Achilles : such a violence of temper was not to be pacified by ordinary methods. Besides, he has made use of the properest personages to carry on the affair ; for who could be supposed to have so great an influence upon Achilles as his own mother, who is a Goddess !

The Goddess seats her by her pensive son,  
She prest his hand, and tender thus begun.

How long, unhappy ! shall thy sorrows flow ;  
And thy heart waste with life-consuming woe :  
Mindless of food, or love whose pleasing reign 165  
Soothes weary life, and softens human pain ?  
O snatch the moments yet within thy pow'r ;  
Not long to live, indulge the am'rous hour !

v. 164. *And thy heart waste with life-consuming woe.*] This expression in the original is very particular. Were it to be translated literally, it must be rendered, *How long wilt thou eat, or prey upon thy own heart* by these sorrows ? And it seems that it was a common way of expressing a deep sorrow ; and Pythagoras uses it in this sense, *μη ἐσθίσιν καὶ δίαν*, that is, grieve not excessively, let not sorrow make too great an impression upon thy heart, *Eustathius*.

v. 168. — *Indulge the am'rous hour !*] The ancients (says *Eustathius*) rejected these verses because of the indecent idea they convey : the Goddess in plain terms advises *Achilles* to go to bed to his mistress, and tells him a woman will be a comfort. The good bishop is of opinion, that they ought to be rejected, but the reason he gives is as extraordinary as that of *Thetis* : soldiers, says he, have more occasion for something to strengthen themselves with, than for women : and this is the reason, continues he, why wrestlers are forbid all commerce with that sex during the whole time of their exercise.

*Dionysius of Halicarnassus* endeavours to justify *Homer* by observing, that this advice of *Thetis* was not given him to induce him to any wantonness, but was intended to indulge a nobler passion, his desire of glory : she advises him

Lo ! Jove himself (for Jove's command I bear)  
 Forbids to tempt the wrath of Heav'n too far. 170

to go to that captive who was restored to him in a public manner to satisfy his honour: to that captive, the detention of whom had been so great a punishment to the whole Grecian army. And therefore Thetis uses a very proper motive to comfort her son, by advising him to gratify at once both his love and glory.

Plutarch has likewise laboured in Homer's justification; he observes that the poet has set the picture of Achilles in this place in a very fair and strong point of light: tho' Achilles had so lately received his beloved Briseis from the hands of Agamemnon; though he knew that his own life drew to a certain period; yet the hero prevails over the lover, and he does not haste to indulge his love: he does not lament Patroclus like a common man by neglecting the duties of life, but he abstains from all pleasure by an excess of sorrow, and the love of his mistress is lost in that of his friend.

This observation excellently justifies Achilles, in not indulging himself with the company of his mistress: the hero indeed prevails so much over the lover, that Thetis thinks herself obliged to recall Briseis to his memory. Yet still the indecency remains. All that can be said in favour of Thetis is, that she was mother to Achilles, and consequently might take the greater freedom with her son.

Madam Dacier disapproves of both the former observations: she has recourse to the lawfulness of such a practice between Achilles and Briseis: and because such commerces in those times were reputed honest, therefore she thinks the advice was decent: the married ladies are obliged to her for this observation, and I hope all tender



No longer then (his fury if thou dread)  
 Detain the relicks of great Hector dead ;  
 Nor vent on senseless earth thy vengeance vain :  
 But yield to ransom, and restore the slain.

To whom Achilles : Be the ransom giv'n, 175  
 And we submit, since such the will of Heav'n.

While thus they commun'd, from th' Olympian  
 bow'rs

Jove orders Iris to the Trojan tow'rs.  
 Haste, winged Goddess! to the sacred town,  
 And urge her monarch to redeem his son ; 180  
 Alone, the Ilian ramparts let him leave,  
 And bear what stern Achilles may receive :

mothers, when their sons are afflicted, will advise them to comfort themselves in this manner.

In short, I am of opinion that this passage outrages decency ; and it is a sign of some weakness to have so much occasion of justification. Indeed the whole passage is capable of a serious construction, and of such a sense as a mother might express to a son with decency : and then it will run thus, " Why art thou, my son, thus afflicted ? " " Why thus resigned to sorrow ? Can neither sleep nor " love divert you ? Short is thy date of life, spend it not " all in weeping, but allow some part of it to love and " pleasure ! " But still the indecency lies in the manner of the expression, which it must be allowed to be almost obscene, (for such is the word *μίσος* *miseri*) all that can be said in defence of it is, that as we are not competent judges of what ideas words might carry in Homer's time, so we ought not entirely to condemn him, because it is possible the expression might not sound so indecently in ancient, as in modern ears.

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Alone, for so we will: no Trojan near;  
 Except to place the dead with decent care,  
 Some aged herald, who with gentle hand, 185  
 May the slow mules and fun'ral car command.  
 Nor let him death, nor let him danger dread,  
 Safe thro' the foe by our protection led:  
 Him Hermes to Achilles shall convey,  
 Guard of his life, and partner of his way. 190  
 Fierce as he is, Achilles' self shall spare  
 His age, nor touch one venerable hair;

v. 189. *Him Hermes to Achilles shall convey.*] The intervention of Mercury was very necessary at this time, and by it the poet not only gives an air of probability to the relation, but also pays a compliment to his countrymen the Grecians: they kept so strict a guard, that nothing but a God could pass unobserved: this highly recommends their military discipline: and Priam not being able to carry the ransom without a chariot, it would have been an offence against probability to have supposed him able to have passed all the guards of the army in his chariot, without the assistance of some Deity: Horace had this passage in his view, Ode the xth of the first book,

“Iniqua Trojæ castra fefellit.”

v. 191. — *Achilles' self shall spare*

*His age, nor touch one venerable hair, &c.]*

It is observable that every word here is a negative, ἀφρων, ἄσκητος, ἀλιτῆμων; Achilles is still so angry that Jupiter cannot say he is wise, judicious, and merciful; he only commends him negatively, and barely says he is not a madman, nor perversely wicked.

Some thought there must be, in a soul so brave,  
Some sense of duty, some desire to save.

Then down her bow the winged Iris drives, 195  
And swift at Priam's mournful court arrives :

It is the observation of the antients, says Eustathius, that all the causes of the sins of man are included in those three words : man either offends out of ignorance, and then he is ἀφρων; or through inadvertency, then he is ἀσπουτος; or wilfully and maliciously, and then he is ἀλδήμων. So that this description agrees very well with the present disposition of Achilles : he is not ἀφρων, because his resentment begins to abate ; he is not ἀσπουτος, because his mother has given him instructions ; nor ἀλδήμων, because he will not offend against the injunctions of Jupiter.

v. 195. *The winged Iris drives, &c.*] Mons. Rapin has been very free upon this passage, where so many machines are made use of, to cause Priam to obtain the body of Hector from Achilles. “ This father (says he) who has “ so much tenderness for his son, who is so superstitious “ in observing the funeral ceremonies, and saving those “ precious remains from the dogs and vultures ; ought “ not to have thought of doing this himself, without “ being thus expressly commanded by the Gods ? Was “ there need of a machine to make him remember that “ he was a father ? ” But this critick entirely forgets what rendered such a conduct of absolute necessity ; namely, the extreme danger and (in all probability) imminent ruin both of the king and state, upon Priam's putting himself into the power of his most inveterate enemy. There is no other method of recovering Hector, and of discharging his funeral rites (which were looked upon by the ancients of so high importance) and therefore the message from Jupiter to encourage Priam, with the assistance

Where the sad sons beside their father's throne  
 Sat bath'd in tears, and answer'd groan with groan.  
 And all amidst them lay the hoary fire,  
 (Sad scene of woe !) his face, his wrapt attire 200  
 Conceal'd from sight; with frantick hands he  
 spread  
 A show'r of ashes o'er his neck and head.  
 From room to room his pensive daughters roam;  
 Whose shrieks and clamours fill the vaulted dome;  
 Mindful of those, who, late their pride and joy, 205  
 Lie pale and breathless round the fields of Troy!  
 Before the king Jove's messenger appears,  
 And thus in whispers greets his trembling ears.

Fear not, oh father ! no ill news I bear; 209  
 From Jove I come, Jove makes thee still his care;  
 For Hector's sake these walls he bids thee leave,  
 And bear what stern Achilles may receive;  
 Alone, for so he wills: no Trojan near,  
 Except to place the dead with decent care,

of Mercury to conduct him, and to prepare Achilles to receive him with favour, was far from impertinent: it was *dignus vindice nodus*, as Horace expresses it.

v. 200. *His face, his wrapt attire Conceal'd from sight.*] The poet has observed a great decency in this place; he was not able to express the grief of his royal mourner, and so covers what he could not represent. From this passage Semanthes the Sicyonian painter borrowed his design in the sacrifice of Iphigenia, and represents his Agamemnon, as Homer does his Priam: *Æschylus* has likewise imitated this place, and draws his Niobe exactly after the manner of Homer. *Eustathius.*



Some aged herald, who with gentle hand, 215  
 May the flow mules and fun'ral car command.  
 Nor shalt thou death, nor shalt thou danger dread ;  
 Safe thro' the foe by his protection led ;  
 Thee Hermes to Pelides shall convey,  
 Guard of thy life, and partner of thy way. 220  
 Fierce as he is, Achilles' self shall spare  
 Thy age, nor touch one venerable hair ;  
 Some thought there must be, in a soul so brave,  
 Some sense of duty, some desire to save. 224

She spoke, and vanish'd. Priam bids prepare  
 His gentle mules, and harness to the car ;  
 There, for the gifts, a polish'd casket lay ;  
 His pious sons the king's command obey.  
 Then past the monarch to his bridal-room,  
 Where cedar-beams the lofty rooms perfume, 230  
 And where the treasures of his empire lay ;  
 Then call'd his queen, and thus began to say.

Unhappy consort of a king distrest !  
 Partake the troubles of thy husband's breast :  
 I saw descend the messenger of Jove, 235  
 Who bids me try Achilles' mind to move ;  
 Forake these ramparts, and with gifts obtain  
 The corpse of Hector, at yon' navy, slain.  
 Tell me thy thought : my heart impels to go  
 Thro' hostile camps, and bears me to the foe. 240

The hoary monarch thus. Her piercing cries  
 Sad Hecuba renews, and then replies.

Ah ! whither wanders thy distemper'd mind ?  
 And where the prudence now that aw'd mankind ;  
 Thro' Phrygia once, and foreign regions known ;  
 Now all confus'd, distracted, overthrown ? 246  
 Singly to pass thro' hosts of foes ! to face  
 (Oh heart of steel !) the murd'rer of thy race !  
 To view that deathful eye, and wander o'er  
 Those hands, yet red with Hector's noble gore ! 250  
 Alas ! my Lord ! he knows not how to spare,  
 And what his mercy, thy slain sons declare ;  
 So brave ! so many fall'n ! To calm his rage  
 Vain were thy dignity, and vain thy age.  
 No—pent in this sad palace, let us give 255  
 To grief, the wretched days we have to live.  
 Still, still for Hector let our sorrows flow,  
 Born to his own, and to his parents woe !  
 Doom'd from the hour his luckless life begun,  
 To dogs, to vultures, and to Peleus' son ! 260  
 Oh ! in his dearest blood might I allay  
 My rage, and these barbarities repay !  
 For ah ! could Hector merit thus, whose breath  
 Expir'd not meanly, in unactive death ?  
 He pour'd his latest blood in manly fight, 265  
 And fell a hero in his country's right.

v. 265. *He pour'd his latest blood in manly fight,]  
 And fell a hero — — ]*

This whole discourse of Hecuba is exceedingly natural;  
 she aggravates the features of Achilles, and softens those

Seek not to stay me, nor my soul affright  
 With words of omen, like a bird of night ;  
 (Reply'd unmov'd the venerable man)  
 'Tis Heav'n commands me, and you urge in vain.  
 Had any mortal voice th' injunction laid, 271  
 Nor augur, priest, or seer had been obey'd.  
 A present Goddess brought the high command,  
 I saw, I heard her, and the word shall stand.  
 I go, ye Gods! obedient to your call : 275  
 If in yon' camp your pow'rs have doom'd my fall,  
 Content—By the same hand let me expire!  
 Add to the slaughter'd son the wretched fire!  
 One cold embrace at least may be allow'd,  
 And my last tears flow mingled with his blood! 280  
 From forth his open'd stores, this said, he drew  
 Twelve costly carpets of refulgent hue,  
 As many vests, as many mantles told,  
 And twelve fair veils and garments stiff with gold.  
 Two tripods next, and twice two chargers shine, 285  
 With ten pure talents from the richest mine;  
 And last a large well-labour'd bowl had place,  
 (The pledge of treaties once with friendly Thrace)

of Hector: her anger blinds her so much, that she can see nothing great in Achilles, and her fondness so much, that she can discern no defects in Hector. Thus she draws Achilles in the fiercest colours, like a Barbarian, and calls him *ἀνάνδης*: but at the same time forgets that Hector ever fled from Achilles, and in the original directly tells us that *he knew not how to fear, or how to fly*. Eustathius.

Seem'd all too mean the stores he could employ,  
For one last look to buy him back to Troy! 290

Lo! the sad father, frantick with his pain,  
Around him furious drives his menial train:

v. 291. *Lo! the sad father, &c.*] This behaviour of Priam is very natural to a person in his circumstances: the loss of his favourite son makes so deep an impression upon his spirits, that he is incapable of consolation; he is displeased with every body; he is angry he knows not why; the disorder and hurry of his spirits make him break out into passionate expressions, and those expressions are contained in short periods, very natural to men in anger, who give not themselves leisure to express their sentiments at full length: it is from the same passion that Priam, in the second speech, treats all his sons with the utmost indignity, calls them gluttons, dancers, and flatterers. Eustathius very justly remarks, that he had Paris particularly in his eye: but his anger makes him transfer that character to the rest of his children, not being calm enough to make a distinction between the innocent and the guilty.

That passage where he runs into the praises of Hector is particularly natural: his concern and fondness make him as extravagant in the commendation of him, as in the disparagement of his other sons: they are less than mortals, he more than man. Rapin has censured this rage of Priam as a breach of the *manners*, and says he might have shewn himself a father otherwise than by this usage of his children. But whoever considers his circumstances, will judge after another manner. Priam, after having been the most wealthy, most powerful, and formidable monarch of Asia, becomes all at once the most miserable of men; he loses in less than eight



In vain each slave with duteous care attends,  
Each office hurts him, and each face offends.

What make ye here? officious crouds! (he cries) 295  
Hence! nor obtrude your anguish on my eyes.

Have ye no griefs at home, to fix ye there;  
Am I the only object of despair?

Am I become my people's common show,  
Set up by Jove your spectacle of woe? 300

No, you must feel him too; yourselves must fall;  
The same stern God to ruin gives you all:

Nor is great Hector lost by me alone;  
Your sole defence, your guardian pow'r is gone!

I see your blood the fields of Phrygia drown, 305  
I see the ruins of your smoking town!

Oh send me, Gods! e'er that sad day shall come,  
A willing ghost to Pluto's dreary dome!

He said, and feebly drives his friends away:  
The sorrowing friends his frantick rage obey. 310

Next on his sons his erring fury falls,  
Polites, Paris, Agathon, he calls,

days the best of his army, and a great number of virtuous sons; he loses the bravest of them all, his glory and his defence, the gallant Hector. This last blow sinks him quite, and changes him so much, that he is no longer the same: he becomes impatient, frantick, unreasonable! the terrible effect of ill fortune! whoever has the least insight into nature, must admire so fine a picture of the force of adversity on an unhappy old man.

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His threats Deïphobus and Dius hear,  
Hippothenus, Pammon, Helenus the seer,  
And gen'rous Antiphon: for yet these nine 315  
Surviv'd, sad relics of his num'rous line.

Inglorious sons, of an unhappy fire!  
Why did not all in Hector's cause expire?  
Wretch that I am! my bravest offspring slain,  
You, the disgrace of Priam's house, remain! 320  
Mestor the brave, renown'd in ranks of war,  
With Troilus, dreadful on his rushing car,  
And last great Hector, more than man divine,  
For sure he seem'd not of terrestrial line!

All those relentless Mars untimely slew, 325  
And left me these, a soft and servile crew,  
Whose days the feast and wanton dance employ,  
Gluttons and flatt'ers, the contempt of Troy!  
Why teach ye not my rapid wheels to run,  
And speed my journey to redeem my son? 330

The sons their father's wretched age revere,  
Forgive his anger, and produce the car.  
High on the seat the cabinet they bind:  
The new-made car with solid beauty shin'd;  
Box was the yoke, embost with costly pains, 335  
And hung with ringlets to receive the reins;

v. 313. *Deïphobus and Dius.*] It has been a dispute whether Δῖος or Ἄλκιος, in v. 251 of the Greek, was a proper name: but Pherecydes (says Eustathius) determines it, and assures us that Dios was a spurious son of Priam.

Nine cubits long, the traces swept the ground ;  
 These to the chariot's polish'd pole they bound,  
 Then fix'd a ring the running reins to guide,  
 And close beneath the gather'd ends were ty'd. 340  
 Next with the gifts (the price of Hector slain)  
 The sad attendants load the groaning wain :  
 Last to the yoke the well-match'd mules they bring,  
 (The gift of Myfia to the Trojan king.)  
 But the fair horses, long his darling care, 345  
 Himself receiv'd, and harness'd to his car :  
 Griev'd as he was, he not this task deny'd :  
 The hoary herald help'd him, at his side.  
 While careful these the gentle courfers join'd,  
 Sad Hecuba approach'd with anxious mind ; 350  
 A golden bowl that foam'd with fragrant wine,  
 (Libation destin'd to the Pow'r divine)  
 Held in her right, before the steeds she stands,  
 And thus consigns it to the monarch's hands.  
 Take this, and pour to Jove ; that safe from  
 harms, 355  
 His grace restore thee to our roof, and arms.  
 Since victor of thy fears, and flighting mine,  
 Heav'n, or thy soul, inspire this bold design :

v. 342. *The sad attendants load the groaning wain.*] It is necessary to observe to the reader, to avoid confusion, that two cars are here prepared ; the one drawn by mules, to carry the presents, and bring back the body of Hector ; the other drawn by horses, in which the herald and Priam rode. *Eustathius.*

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Pray to that God, who high on Ida's brow  
 Surveys thy desolated realms below, 360  
 His winged messenger to send from high,  
 And lead thy way with heav'nly augury:  
 Let the strong sov'reign of the plummy race  
 Tow'r on the right of yon' æthereal space. 364  
 That sign beheld, and strengthen'd from above,  
 Boldly pursue the journey mark'd by Jove;  
 But if the God his augury denies,  
 Suppress thy impulse, nor reject advice.

'Tis just (said Priam) to the Sire above  
 To raise our hands; for who so good as Jove? 370  
 He spoke, and bade th' attendant handmaid bring  
 The purest water of the living spring:  
 (Her ready hands the ewer and basin held)  
 Then took the golden cup his queen had fill'd;  
 On the mid pavement pours the rosy wine, 375  
 Uplifts his eyes, and calls the Pow'r divine.

Oh first, and greatest! Heav'n's imperial Lord!  
 On lofty Ida's holy hill ador'd!

v. 377. *Oh first and greatest! &c.*] Eustathius observes, that there is not one instance in the whole Ilias of any prayer that was justly preferred, that failed of success. This proceeding of Homer's is very judicious, and answers exactly to the true end of poetry, which is to please and instruct. Thus Priam prays that Achilles may cease his wrath, and compassionate his miseries; and Jupiter grants his request: the unfortunate king obtains compassion, and in his most inveterate enemy finds a friend.



To stern Achilles now direct my ways,  
 And teach him mercy when a father prays. 380  
 If such thy will, dispatch from yonder sky  
 Thy sacred bird, celestial augury!  
 Let the strong sov'reign of the plummy race  
 Tow'r on the right of yon' æthereal space:  
 So shall thy suppliant, strengthen'd from above,  
 Fearless pursue the journey mark'd by Jove. 386  
 Jove heard his pray'r, and from the throne on high  
 Dispatch'd his bird, celestial augury!  
 The swift-wing'd chafer of the feather'd game,  
 And known to Gods by Percnos' lofty name. 390  
 Wide, as appears some palace-gate display'd,  
 So broad, his pinions stretch'd their ample shade,  
 As stooping dexter with resounding wings  
 Th' imperial bird descends in airy rings.  
 A dawn of joy in ev'ry face appears; 395  
 The mourning matron dries her tim'rous tears:  
 Swift on the car th' impatient monarch sprung;  
 The brazen portal in his passage rung.  
 The mules preceding draw the loaded wain,  
 Charg'd with the gifts: Idæus holds the rein: 400  
 The king himself his gentle steeds controlls,  
 And thro' surrounding friends the chariot rolls.  
 On his slow wheels the following people wait,  
 Mourn at each step, and give him up to Fate;  
 With hands uplifted, eye him as he past, 405  
 And gaz'd upon him as they gaz'd their last.

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Now forward fares the father on his way,  
Thro' the lone fields, and back to Ilion they.  
Great Jove beheld him as he crost the plain,  
And felt the woes of miserable man. 410  
Then thus to Hermes. Thou whose constant cares  
Still succour mortals, and attend their pray'rs;  
Behold an object to thy charge consign'd:  
If ever pity touch'd thee for mankind;  
Go, guard the fire; th' observing foe prevent, 415  
And safe conduct him to Achilles' tent.

The God obeys, his golden pinions binds,  
And mounts incumbent on the wings of winds,

v. 417. *The description of Mercury.*] A man must have no taste for poetry that does not admire this sublime description: Virgil has translated it almost verbatim in the ivth book of the *Æneis*, v. 240.

“ — — Ille patris magni parere parabat  
“ Imperio, & primùm pedibus talaria nectit  
“ Aurea, quæ sublimem alis, five æquora supra,  
“ Seu terram, rapido pariter cum flamine portant.  
“ Tum virgam capit, hâc animas ille evocat orco  
“ Pallentes, alias sub tristia tartara mittit;  
“ Dat somnos, adimitque, & lumina morte resignat.”

It is hard to determine which is more excellent, the copy, or the original: Mercury appears in both pictures with equal majesty; and the Roman dress becomes him as well as the Grecian. Virgil has added the latter part of the fifth, and the whole sixth line, to Homer, which makes it still more full and majestic.

That high, thro' fields of air, his flight sustain,  
 O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless main :  
 Then grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly, 420  
 Or in soft slumbers seals the wakeful eye ;  
 Thus arm'd, swift Hermes steers his airy way,  
 And stoops on Hellespont's resounding sea.  
 A beauteous youth, majestic and divine, 425  
 He seem'd ; fair offspring of some princely line !  
 Now twilight veil'd the glaring face of day,  
 And clad the dusky fields in sober gray ;

Give me leave to produce a passage out of Milton of near affinity with the lines above, which is not inferior to Homer or Virgil : it is the description of the descent of an angel.

— — Down thither, prone in flight  
 He speeds, and thro' the vast æthereal sky  
 Sails between worlds and worlds ; with steady wing :  
 Now on the polar winds : then with quick force  
 Winnows the buxom air—  
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar  
 Circled his head ; nor less his locks behind  
 Illustrious, on his shoulders fledg'd with wings,  
 Lay waving round, — — &c.

v. 427. *Now twilight veil'd the glaring face of day.*] The poet by such intimations as these recalls to our minds the exact time which Priam takes up in his journey to Achilles: he set out in the evening; and by the time that he had reached the tomb of Ilus, it was grown somewhat dark, which shews that this tomb stood at some distance from the city: here Mercury meets him, and when it was quite dark, guides him into the presence of Achilles. By these methods we may discover how exactly the poet

Book XXIV. HOMER'S ILIAD. 199

What-time the herald and the hoary king,  
(Their chariots stopping at the silver spring, 430  
That circling Ilus' ancient marble flows)  
Allow'd their mules and steeds a short repose.  
Thro' the dim shade the herald first espies  
A man's approach, and thus to Priam cries.  
I mark some foe's advance: O king! beware; 435  
This hard adventure claims thy utmost care:  
For much I fear, destruction hovers nigh:  
Our state asks counsel; Is it best to fly?  
Or, old and helpless, at his feet to fall,  
(Two wretched suppliants) and for mercy call? 440

Th' afflicted monarch shiver'd with despair;  
Pale grew his face, and upright stood his hair;  
Sunk was his heart; his colour went and came;  
A sudden trembling shook his aged frame:  
When Hermes greeting, touch'd his royal hand,  
And gentle, thus accosts with kind demand. 446

preserves the unities of time and place; and that he allots space sufficient for the actions which he describes, and yet does not crowd more incidents into any interval of time than may be executed in as much as he allows: thus it being improbable that so stubborn a man as Achilles should relent in a few moments, the poet allows a whole night for this affair; so that Priam has leisure enough to go and return, and time enough remaining to persuade Achilles.



Say whither, father ! when each mortal fight  
Is seal'd in sleep, thou wander'st thro' the night.

v. 447, &c. *The speech of Mercury to Priam.*] I shall not trouble the reader with the dreams of Eustathius, who tells us, that this fiction of Mercury, is partly true and partly false: it is true that his father is old; for Jupiter is king of the whole universe, was from eternity, and created both men and Gods: in like manner, when Mercury says he is the seventh child of his father, Eustathius affirms that he meant that there were six planets besides Mercury. Sure it requires great pains and thought to be so learnedly absurd; the supposition which he makes afterwards is far more natural. Priam, says he, might by chance meet with one of the Myrmidons, who might conduct him unobserved through the camp into the presence of Achilles: and as the execution of any wise design is ascribed to Pallas, so may this clandestine enterprize be said to be managed by the guidance of Mercury.

But perhaps this whole passage may be better explained by having recourse to the Pagan theology: it was an opinion that obtained in those early days, that Jupiter frequently sent some friendly messengers to protect the innocent, so that Homer might intend to give his readers a lecture of morality, by telling us that this unhappy king was under the protection of the Gods.

Madam Dacier carries it farther. Homer (says she) instructed by tradition, knew that God sends his angels to the succour of the afflicted. The scripture is full of examples of this truth. The story of Tobit has a wonderful relation with this of Homer: Tobit sent his son to Rages, a city of Media, to receive a considerable sum; Tobias did not know the way: he found at his door a young man clothed with a majestick glory, which attracted admiration; it was an angel under the form of a man. This angel being asked who he was, answered (as

Why roam thy mules and steeds the plains along,  
Thro' Grecian foes, so num'rous and so strong? 450  
What could'st thou hope, should these thy treasures  
view;

These, who with endless hate thy race pursue?  
For what defence, alas! could'st thou provide;  
Thyself not young, a weak old man thy guide?  
Yet suffer not thy soul to sink with dread: 455  
From me no harm shall touch thy rev'rend head;  
From Greece I'll guard thee too; for in those lines  
The living image of my father shines.

Thy words, that speak benevolence of mind  
Are true, my son! (the god-like sire rejoin'd) 460  
Great are my hazards; but the Gods survey  
My steps, and send thee, guardian of my way.  
Hail, and be blest! For scarce of mortal kind  
Appear thy form, thy feature, and thy mind.

Mercury does here) by a fiction; he said that he was of the children of Israel, that his name was Azarias, and that he was son of Ananias. This angel conducted Tobias in safety; he gave him instructions; and when he was to receive the recompence which the father and son offered him, he declared that he was the angel of the Lord, took his flight towards heaven, and disappeared. Here is a great conformity in the ideas and in the style; and the example of our author so long before Tobit, proves, that this opinion of God's sending his angels to the aid of man was very common, and much spread amongst the Pagans in those former times. *Dacier.*

Nor true are all thy words, nor erring wide ;  
 (The sacred messenger of Heav'n reply'd) 466  
 But say, convey'ft thou thro' the lonely plains  
 What yet most precious of thy store remains,  
 To lodge in safety with some friendly hand :  
 Prepar'd, perchance, to leave thy native land ? 470  
 Or fly'ft thou now?—What hopes can Troy retain ;  
 Thy matchless son, her guard and glory, slain ?

The king, alarm'd. Say what, and whence thou  
 art,

Who search the sorrows of a parent's heart,  
 And know so well how god-like Hector dy'd. 475  
 Thus Priam spoke, and Hermes thus reply'd.

You tempt me, father, and with pity touch :  
 On this sad subject you enquire too much.  
 Oft' have these eyes that god-like Hector view'd  
 In glorious fight, with Grecian blood embu'd : 480  
 I saw him when, like Jove, his flames he tost  
 On thousand ships, and wither'd half an host :  
 I saw, but help'd not : stern Achilles' ire  
 Forbade assistance, and enjoy'd the fire.  
 For him I serve, of Myrmidonian race ; 485  
 One ship convey'd us from our native place ;  
 Polyctor is my sire, an honour'd name,  
 Old like thyself, and not unknown to fame ;  
 Of sev'n his sons, by whom the lot was cast  
 To serve our prince ; it fell on me, the last. 490  
 To watch this quarter my adventure falls:  
 For with the morn the Greeks attack your walls ;

Book XXIV. HOMER'S ILIAD. 203

Sleepless they sit, impatient to engage,  
And scarce their rulers check their martial rage.

If then thou art of stern Pelides' train, 495  
(The mournful monarch thus rejoin'd again)  
Ah tell me truly, where, oh! where are laid  
My son's dear relics? what befalls him dead?  
Have dogs dismember'd (on the naked plains)  
Or yet unmangled rest, his cold remains? 500

O favour'd of the skies! (Thus answer'd then  
The Pow'r that mediates between Gods and men)  
Nor dogs nor vultures have thy Hector rent,  
But whole he lies, neglected in the tent:  
This the twelfth ev'ning since he rested there, 505  
Untouch'd by worms, untainted by the air.  
Still as Aurora's ruddy beam is spread,  
Round his friend's tomb Achilles drags the dead:  
Yet undisfigur'd, or in limb or face,  
All fresh he lies, with ev'ry living grace, 510  
Majestical in death! No stains are found  
O'er all the corse, and clos'd is ev'ry wound;  
Tho' many a wound they gave. Some heav'nly care,  
Some hand divine, preserves him ever fair:  
Or all the host of heav'n, to whom he led 515  
A life so grateful, still regard him dead.

Thus spoke to Priam the celestial guide,  
And joyful thus the royal sire reply'd.



Blest is the man who pays the Gods above  
 The constant tribute of respect and love; 520  
 Those who inhabit the Olympian bow'r  
 My son forgot not, in exalted pow'r;  
 And Heav'n, that ev'ry virtue bears in mind,  
 Ev'n to the ashes of the just, is kind.  
 But thou, oh gen'rous youth! this goblet take, 525  
 A pledge of gratitude, for Hector's sake;  
 And while the fav'ring Gods our steps survey,  
 Safe to Pelides' tent conduct my way.

To whom the latent God. O King forbear  
 To tempt my youth, for apt is youth to err: 530

v. 519. *Blest is the man, &c.*] Homer now begins, after a beautiful and long fable, to give the moral of it, and display his poetical justice in rewards and punishments: thus Hector fought in a bad cause, and therefore suffers in the defence of it; but because he was a good man, and obedient to the Gods in other respects, his very remains become the care of Heaven.

I think it necessary to take notice to the reader, that nothing is more admirable than the conduct of Homer throughout his whole poem, in respect to morality. He justifies the character of Horace,

“ — Quid pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non  
 “ Plenius & melius Chrysippo & Crantore dicit.”

If the reader does not observe the morality of the Ilias, he loses half, and the nobler part of its beauty: he reads it as a common romance, and mistakes the chief aim of it, which is to instruct,

But can I, absent from my prince's sight,  
 Take gifts in secret, that must shun the light?  
 What from our master's int'rest thus we draw,  
 Is but a licens'd theft that 'scapes the law.  
 Respecting him, my soul abjures th' offence; 535  
 And as the crime, I dread the consequence.  
 Thee, far as Argos, pleas'd I could convey;  
 Guard of thy life, and partner of thy way:  
 On thee attend, thy safety to maintain,  
 O'er pathless forests, or the roaring main. 540

He said, then took the chariot at the bound,  
 And snatch'd the reins, and whirl'd the lash around:  
 Before th' inspiring God that urg'd them on,  
 The courfers fly, with spirit not their own. 544  
 And now they reach'd the naval walls, and found  
 The guards repasting, while the bowls go round;  
 On these the virtue of his wand he tries,  
 And pours deep slumber on their watchful eyes:  
 Then heav'd the massy gates, remov'd the bars,  
 And o'er the trenches led the rolling cars. 550

v. 531. *But can I, absent, &c.*] In the original of this place (which I have paraphrased a little) the word *εὐχόμενος* is remarkable. Priam offers Mercury (whom he looks upon as a soldier of Achilles) a present, which he refuses because his prince is ignorant of it; this present he calls a direct *theft* or *robbery*; which may shew us how strict the notions of justice were in the days of Homer, when if a prince's servant received any present without the knowledge of his master, he was esteemed a thief and a robber. *Eustathius*.

Unseen, thro' all the hostile camp they went,  
 And now approach'd Pelides' lofty tent.  
 On firs the roof was rais'd, and cover'd o'er  
 With reeds collected from the marshy shore;

v. 553. *On firs the roof was rais'd.*] I have in the course of these observations described the method of encamping used by the Grecians: the reader has here a full and exact description of the tent of Achilles: this royal pavilion was built with long palisadoes made of fir: the top of it covered with reeds, and the inside was divided into several apartments: thus Achilles had his *αὐλὴ μέγαν*, or large hall, and behind it were lodging rooms. So in the ninth book Phoenix has a bed prepared for him in one apartment; Patroclus has another for himself and his captive Iphis, and Achilles has a third for himself and his mistress Diomeda.

But we must not imagine that the other Myrmidons had tents of the like dimensions: they were, as Eustathius observes, inferiour to this royal one of Achilles: which indeed is no better than an hovel, yet agrees very well with the duties of a soldier, and the simplicity of those early times.

I am of opinion that such fixed tents were not used by the Grecians in their common marches, but only during the time of sieges, when their long stay in one place made it necessary to build such tents as are here described; at other times they lay like Diomed in the tenth book, in the open air, their spears standing upright, to be ready upon any alarm; and with the hides of beasts spread on the ground, instead of a bed.

It is worthy observation, that Homer even upon so trivial an occasion as the describing the tent of Achilles, takes an opportunity to shew the superiour strength of his hero; and tells us that three men could scarce open the door of his pavilion, but Achilles could open it alone.

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And, fenc'd with palisades, a hall of state, 555  
 (The work of soldiers) where the hero sat.  
 Large was the door, whose well compacted strength  
 A solid pine-tree barr'd, of wond'rous length ;  
 Scarce three strong Greeks could lift its mighty  
 weight,  
 But great Achilles singly clos'd the gate. 560  
 This Hermes (such the pow'r of Gods) set wide ;  
 Then swift alighted the celestial guide,  
 And thus, reveal'd—Hear, prince ! and understand  
 Thou ow'st thy guidance to no mortal hand :  
 Hermes I am, descended from above, 565  
 The King of arts, the messenger of Jove.  
 Farewel : to shun Achilles fight I fly ;  
 Uncommon are such favours of the sky,  
 Nor stand confest to frail mortality. }  
 Now fearless enter, and prefer thy pray'rs ; 570  
 Adjure him by his father's silver hairs,

v. 569. *Nor stand confest to frail mortality.*] Eustathius thinks it was from this maxim, that the princes of the East assumed that air of majesty which separates them from the sight of their subjects ; but I should rather believe that Homer copied this after the originals, from some kings of his time : it not being unlikely that this policy is very ancient. *Dacier.*

v. 571. *Adjure him by his father, &c.*] Eustathius observes that Priam does not entirely follow the instructions of Mercury, but only calls to his remembrance his aged father Peleus : and this was judiciously done by Priam : for what motive to compassion could arise from the mention of



His son, his mother ! urge him to bestow  
Whatever pity that stern heart can know.

Thus having said, he vanish'd from his eyes,  
And in a moment shot into the skies : 575  
The king, confirm'd from heav'n, alighted there,  
And left his aged herald on the car.

With solemn pace thro' various rooms he went,  
And found Achilles in his inner tent :  
There sat the hero ; Alcimus the brave, 580  
And great Automedon, attendance gave :  
These serv'd his person at the royal feast ;  
Around, at awful distance, stood the rest.

Thetis, who was a Goddess, and incapable of misfortune ? Or how could Neoptolemus be any inducement to make Achilles pity Priam, when at the same time he flourished in the greatest prosperity ? Therefore Priam only mentions his father Peleus, who, like him, stood upon the very brink of the grave, and was liable to the same misfortunes he suffered. These are the remarks of Eustathius ; but how then shall we justify Mercury, who gave him such improper instructions with relation to Thetis ? All that can be said in defence of the poet is, that Thetis, though a Goddess, has through the whole course of the Ilias been described as a partner in all the afflictions of Achilles, and consequently might be made use of as an inducement to raise the passion of Achilles. Priam might have said, I conjure thee by the love thou bearest to thy mother, take pity on me ! For if she who is a Goddess would grieve for the loss of her beloved son, how greatly must the loss of Hector afflict the unfortunate Hecuba and Priam ?

Unseen by these, the king his entry made ;  
 And prostrate now before Achilles laid, 585  
 Sudden, (a venerable sight) appears ;  
 Embrac'd his knees, and bath'd his hands in  
 tears ;

Those direful hands his kisses prefs'd, embru'd  
 Ev'n with the best, the dearest of his blood !

As when a wretch, (who conscious of his crime,  
 Pursu'd for murder, flies his native clime) 591  
 Just gains some frontier, breathless, pale ! amaz'd !  
 All gaze, all wonder : thus Achilles gaz'd :  
 Thus stood th' attendants stupid with surprise ;  
 All mute, yet seem'd to question with their eyes :  
 Each look'd on other, none the silence broke, 596  
 'Till thus at last the kingly suppliant spoke.

v. 586. *Sudden, (a venerable sight !)* appears.] I fancy this interview between Priam and Achilles would furnish an admirable subject for a painter, in the surprise of Achilles, and the other spectators, the attitude of Priam, and the sorrows in the countenance of this unfortunate king.

That circumstance of Priam's kissing the hands of Achilles is inimitably fine ; he kissed, says Homer, the hands of Achilles ; those terrible, murderous hands that had robbed him of so many sons : by these two words the poet recalls to our mind all the noble actions performed by Achilles in the whole Ilias ; and at the same time strikes us with the utmost compassion for this unhappy king, who is reduced so low, as to be obliged to kiss those hands that had slain his subjects, and ruined his kingdom and family.

Ah think, thou favour'd of the Pow'rs divine!  
Think of thy father's age, and pity mine!

v. 593. *The speech of Priam to Achilles.*] The curiosity of the reader must needs be awakened to know how Achilles would behave to this unfortunate king; it requires all the art of the poet to sustain the violent character of Achilles, and yet at the same time to soften him into compassion. To this end the poet uses no preamble, but breaks directly into that circumstance which is most likely to mollify him, and the two first words he utters are, *μῆναι Πάρις*, *see thy father, O Achilles, in me!* Nothing could be more happily imagined than this entrance into his speech; Achilles has every where been described as bearing a great affection to his father, and by two words the poet recalls all the tenderness, that love and duty can suggest to an affectionate son.

Priam tells Achilles, that Hector fell in the defence of his country: I am far from thinking that this was inserted accidentally; it could not fail of having a very good effect upon Achilles, not only as one brave man naturally loves another, but as it implies that Hector had no particular enmity against Achilles, but that though he fought against him, it was in defence of his country.

The reader will observe that Priam repeats the beginning of his speech, and recalls his father to his memory in the conclusion of it. This is done with great judgment; the poet takes care to enforce his petition with the strongest motive, and leaves it fresh upon his memory; and possibly Priam might perceive that the mention of his father had made a deeper impression upon Achilles than any other part of his petition, therefore while the mind of Achilles dwells upon it, he again sets him before his imagination by this repetition, and softens him into compassion.

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In me, that father's rev'rend image trace, 600

Those silver hairs, that venerable face;

His trembling limbs, his helpless person, see!

In all my equal, but in misery!

Yet now, perhaps, some turn of human fate

Expels him helpless from his peaceful state; 605

Think, from some pow'rful foe thou see'st him fly,

And beg protection with a feeble cry.

Yet still one comfort in his soul may rise;

He hears his son still lives to glad his eyes;

And hearing, still may hope a better day 610

May send him thee, to chase that foe away.

No comfort to my griefs, no hopes remain,

The best, the bravest of my sons are slain!

Yet what a race; e'er Greece to Ilion came,

The pledge of many a lov'd, and loving dame: 615

Nineteen one mother bore—Dead, all are dead!

How oft', alas! has wretched Priam bled?

Still one was left, their loss to recompense;

His father's hope, his country's last defence.

Him too thy rage has slain! beneath thy steel 620

Unhappy in his country's cause he fell!

For him, thro' hostile camps I bent my way,

For him thus prostrate at thy feet I lay;

Large gifts proportion'd to thy wrath I bear;

Oh hear the wretched, and the Gods revere! 625

Think of thy father, and this face behold!

See him in me, as helpless and as old!



Tho' not so wretched: there he yields to me,  
 The first of men in sov'reign misery!  
 Thus forc'd to kneel, thus grov'ling to embrace 630  
 The scourge and ruin of my realm and race:  
 Suppliant my children's murd'rer to implore,  
 And kiss those hands yet reeking with their gore!

These words soft pity in the chief inspire,  
 Touch'd with the dear remembrance of his fire. 635  
 Then with his hand (as prostrate still he lay)  
 The old man's cheek he gently turn'd away.  
 Now each by turns indulg'd the gush of woe;  
 And now the mingled tides together flow:  
 This low on earth, that gently bending o'er, 640  
 A father one, and one a son deplore:  
 But great Achilles diff'rent passions rend,  
 And now his fire he mourns, and now his friend.

v. 634. *These words soft pity, &c.]* We are now come almost to the end of the poem, and consequently to the end of the anger of Achilles: and Homer has described the abatement of it with excellent judgment. We may here observe how necessary the conduct of Homer was, in sending Thetis to prepare her son to use Priam with civility: it would have been ill suited with the violent temper of Achilles to have used Priam with tenderness without such pre-admonition; nay, the unexpected sight of his enemy might probably have carried him into violence and rage: but Homer has avoided these absurdities; for Achilles being already prepared for a reconciliation, the misery of this venerable prince naturally melts him into compassion.

Th' infectious softness thro' the heroes ran ;  
 One universal solemn show'r began ; 645 }  
 They bore as heroes, but they felt as man.

Satiate at length with unavailing woes,  
 From the high throne divine Achilles rose ;  
 The rev'rend monarch by the hand he rais'd ;  
 On his white beard and form majestick gaz'd, 650  
 Not unrelenting : then serene began  
 With words to soothe the miserable man.

Alas ! what weight of anguish hast thou known ?  
 Unhappy prince ! thus guardless and alone  
 To pass thro' foes, and thus undaunted face 655  
 The man whose fury has destroy'd thy race ?  
 Heav'n fure has arm'd thee with a heart of steel,  
 A strength proportion'd to the woes you feel.

v. 653. *Achilles's speech to Priam.*] There is not a more beautiful passage in the whole Ilias than this before us : Homer to shew that Achilles was not a mere soldier, here draws him as a person of excellent sense and sound reason : Plato himself (who condemns this passage) could not speak more like a true philosopher : and it was a piece of great judgment thus to describe him ; for the reader would have retained but a very indifferent opinion of the hero of a poem, that had no qualification but mere strength : it also shews the art of the poet thus to defer this part of his character to the very conclusion of the poem : by these means he fixes an idea of his greatness upon our minds, and makes his hero go off the stage with applause.

Neither does he here ascribe more wisdom to Achilles than he might really be master of ; for as Eustathius observes, he had Chiron and Phœnix for his tutors, and a Goddeſs for his mother.

Rise then : let reason mitigate our care :  
 To mourn, avails not : man is born to bear. 660  
 Such is, alas ! the Gods severe decree :  
 They, only they are blest, and only free.  
 Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,  
 The source of evil one, and one of good ;  
 From thence the cup of mortal man he fills, 665  
 Blessings to these, to those distributes ills ;  
 To most, he mingles both : the wretch decreed  
 To taste the bad, unmix'd, is curst indeed ;

v. 663. *Two urns by Jove's high throne, &c.*] This is an admirable allegory, and very beautifully imagined by the poet. Plato has accused it as an impiety to say that God gives evil : but it seems borrowed from the eastern way of speaking, and bears a great resemblance to several expressions in Scripture : thus in the Psalms, *in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and he poureth out of the same ; as for the dregs thereof, all the ungodly of the earth shall drink them.*

It was the custom of the Jews to give condemned persons, just before execution, *οἶνον κομυχισμένον*, wine mixed with myrrh to make him less sensible of pain : thus Proverbs xxi. 6. *Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish.* This custom was so frequent among the Jews, that the cup which was given him before execution, came to denote death itself, as in that passage, *Father let this cup pass from me.*

Some have supposed that there were three urns, one of good, and two of evil ; thus Pindar,

Ἐν γὰρ ἐσθλὸν, πρήματα Κύνει  
 Δαιμόναι βροτοῖς ἀθάνατοι,

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Pursu'd by wrongs, by meagre famine driv'n,  
 He wanders, outcast both of earth and heav'n. 670  
 The happiest, taste not happiness sincere;  
 But find the cordial draught is dash'd with care.  
 Who more than Peleus shone in wealth and pow'r:  
 What stars concurring blest his natal hour;  
 A realm, a Goddess, to his wishes giv'n; 675  
 Grac'd by the Gods with all the gifts of Heav'n?  
 One evil, yet, o'ertakes his latest day:  
 No race succeeding to imperial sway;  
 An only son; and he (alas!) ordain'd  
 To fall untimely in a foreign land. 680  
 See him, in Troy, the pious care decline  
 Of his weak age, to live the curse of thine!  
 Thou too, old man, hast happier days beheld;  
 In riches once, in children once excell'd;  
 Extended Phrygia own'd thy ample reign, 685  
 And all fair Lesbos' blissful seats contain.  
 And all wide Hellespont's unmeasur'd main. }

But, as Eustathius observes, the word *ἑταῖρος* shews that there were but two, for that word is never used when more than two are intended.

v. 685. *Extended Phrygia, &c.*] Homer here gives us a piece of geography, and shews us the full extent of Priam's kingdom. Lesbos bounded it on the south, Phrygia on the east, and the Hellespont on the north. This kingdom, according to Strabo in the thirteenth book, was divided into nine dynasties, who all depended upon Priam as their king: so that what Homer here relates of Priam's power is literally true, and confirmed by history. *Eustathius.*



But since the God his hand has pleas'd to turn,  
 And fill thy measure from his bitter urn,  
 What sees the fun, but hapless heroes falls? 690  
 War, and the blood of men, surround thy walls!  
 What must be, must be. Bear thy lot, nor shed  
 These unavailing sorrows o'er the dead;  
 Thou canst not call him from the Stygian shore,  
 But thou, alas! may'st live to suffer more! 695

To whom the king. Oh favour'd of the skies!  
 Here let me grow to earth! since Hector lies }  
 On the bare beach depriv'd of obsequies. }  
 Oh give me Hector! to my eyes restore  
 His corse, and take the gifts: I ask no more. 700  
 Thou, as thou may'st, these boundless stores enjoy;  
 Safe may'st thou sail, and turn thy wrath from Troy;  
 So shall thy pity and forbearance give  
 A weak old man to see the light and live!

Move me no more (Achilles thus replies, 705  
 While kindling anger sparkled in his eyes)

v. 706. *While kindling anger sparkled in his eyes.*] I believe every reader must be surpris'd, as I confess I was, to see Achilles fly out into so sudden a passion, without any apparent reason for it. It can scarce be imagined that the name of Hector (as Eustathius thinks) could throw him into so much violence, when he had heard it mentioned with patience by Priam in this very conference: especially if we remember that Achilles had actually determin'd to restore the body of Hector to Priam. I was therefore very well pleas'd to find that the words in the original would bear another interpretation, and

Nor seek by tears my steady soul to bend;  
To yield thy Hector I myself intend:

such a one as naturally solves the difficulty. The meaning of the passage I fancy may be this: Priam perceiving that his address had mollified the heart of Achilles, takes this opportunity to persuade him to give over the war, and return home; especially since his anger was sufficiently satisfied by the fall of Hector. Immediately Achilles takes fire at this proposal, and answers, "Is it not enough that I have determined to restore thy son? Ask no more, lest I retract that resolution." In this view we see a natural reason for the sudden passion of Achilles.

What may perhaps strengthen this conjecture is the word *πρῶτον*; and then the sense will run thus; Since I have found so much favour in thy sight, as first to permit me to live, O would'st thou still enlarge my happiness, and return home to thy own country! &c.

This opinion may be farther established from what follows in the latter end of this interview, where Achilles asks Priam how many days he would request for the interment of Hector? Achilles had refused to give over the war, but yet consents to intermit it a few days; and then the sense will be this: "I will not consent to return home, but ask a time for a cessation, and it shall be granted." And what most strongly speaks for this interpretation is the answer of Priam; I ask, says he, eleven days to bury my son, and then let the war commence again, since it *must be so*, *εἴπερ ἀνάγκη*; since you necessitate me to it; or since you will not be persuaded to leave these shores.

v. 706. *While kindling anger sparkled in his eyes.*] The reader may be pleased to observe that this is the last rally of the resentment of Achilles; and the poet judiciously describes him moderating it by his own reflection: so that his reason now prevails over his anger, and the design of the poem is fully executed.

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For know, from Jove my Goddess-mother came,  
 (Old Ocean's daughter, silver-footed dame)  
 Nor com'st thou but by Heav'n ; nor com'st alone,  
 Some God impels with courage not thy own :  
 No human hand the weighty gates unbarr'd,  
 Nor could the boldest of our youth have dar'd  
 To pass our out-works, or elude the guard. 715  
 Cease ; lest neglectful of high Jove's command  
 I show thee, king ! thou tread'st on hostile land ;  
 Release my knees, thy suppliant arts give o'er,  
 And shake the purpose of my soul no more.

The fire obey'd him, trembling and o'er-aw'd.  
 Achilles, like a lion, rush'd abroad ; 721  
 Automedon and Alcimus attend,  
 (Whom most he honour'd, since he lost his friend ;)  
 These to unyoke the mules and horses went,  
 And led the hoary herald to the tent ; 725

V. 709, 710. *For know, from Jove my Goddess-mother came.*] The injustice of La Motte's criticism, (who blames Homer for representing Achilles so mercenary, as to enquire into the price offered for Hector's body before he would restore it) will appear plainly from this passage, where he makes Achilles expressly say, it is not for any other reason that he delivers the body, but that Heaven had directly commanded it. The words are very full.

— — Διόθεν δέ μοι ἄγγελος ἦλθε  
 Μήτηρ ἢ μ' ἔτεκεν, Δυσάρτη ἀλίοιο γέροντος,  
 Καὶ δέ σ' ἐγνώσκω Πριάμει φρεσὶν, ὃδὲ με λήθεις,  
 Ὅτι θεῶν τις ἦγε θεὰς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν.

Book XXIV. HOMER'S ILIAD. 219

Next heap'd on high the num'rous presents bear  
(Great Hector's ransom) from the polish'd car.  
Two splendid mantles, and a carpet spread,  
They leave ; to cover, and inwrap the dead.  
Then call the handmaids, with assistant toil 730  
To wash the body and anoint with oil,  
Apart from Priam ; lest th' unhappy sire  
Provok'd to passion, once more rouse to ire  
The stern Pelides ; and nor sacred age, 734  
Nor Jove's command, should check the rising rage.  
This done, the garments o'er the corse they spread ;  
Achilles lifts it to the fun'ral bed :

Then, while the body on the car they laid,  
He groans, and calls on lov'd Patroclus' shade. 739

If, in that gloom which never light must know,  
The deeds of mortals touch the ghosts below:  
O friend ! forgive me, that I thus fulfil  
(Restoring Hector) Heaven's unquestion'd will.  
The gifts the father gave, be ever thine,  
To grace thy *manes*, and adorn thy shrine. 745

He said, and ent'ring, took his seat of state,  
Where full before him rev'rend Priam sat :  
To whom, compos'd, the God-like chief begun.  
Lo ! to thy pray'r restor'd, thy breathless son ;  
Extended on the fun'ral couch he lies ; 750  
And soon as morning paints the eastern skies,  
The sight is granted to thy longing eyes.  
But now the peaceful hours of sacred night  
Demand refection, and to rest invite :



Nor thou, O father ! thus consum'd with woe, 755  
 The common cares that nourish life, forego.  
 Not thus did Niobe, of form divine,  
 A parent once, whose sorrows equall'd thine :  
 Six youthful sons, as many blooming maids,  
 In one sad day behold the Stygian shades ; 760  
 Those by Apollo's silver bow were slain,  
 These, Cynthia's arrows stretch'd upon the plain :  
 So was her pride chastis'd by wrath divine,  
 Who match'd her own with bright Latona's line ;  
 But two the Goddess, twelve the queen en-  
 joy'd ; 765  
 Those boasted twelve th' avenging two destroy'd.  
 Steep'd in their blood, and in the dust outspread,  
 Nine days, neglected, lay expos'd the dead ;  
 None by to weep them, to inhume them none ;  
 (For Jove had turn'd the nation all to stone :) 770  
 The Gods themselves at length relenting, gave  
 Th' unhappy race the honours of a grave.

v. 757. *Not thus did Niobe, &c* ] Achilles, to comfort Priam, tells him a known history ; which was very proper to work this effect. Niobe had lost all her children, Priam had some remaining. Niobe's had been nine days extended on the earth, drowned in their blood, in the sight of their people, without any one presenting himself to inter them : Hector has likewise been twelve days, but in the midst of his enemies ; therefore it is no wonder that no one has paid him the last duties. The Gods at last interred Niobe's children, and the Gods likewise are concerned to procure honourable funerals for Hector. *Eustathius.*

Book XXIV. HOMER'S ILIAD. 221

Herself a rock, (for such was Heaven's high will)  
 Thro' deserts wild now pours a weeping rill ;  
 Where round the bed whence Achelous springs, 775  
 The wat'ry fairies dance in mazy rings,  
 There high on Sipylus's shaggy brow,  
 She stands her own sad monument of woe ;  
 The rock for ever lasts, the tears for ever flow. }

Such griefs, O king! have other parents known ;  
 Remember theirs, and mitigate thy own. 781  
 The care of Heav'n thy Hector has appear'd,  
 Nor shall he lie unwept, and uninterr'd ;  
 Soon may thy aged cheeks in tears be drown'd,  
 And all the eyes of Ilion stream around. 785

He said, and rising, chose the victim ewe  
 With silver fleece, which his attendants slew.  
 The limbs they sever from the reeking hide,  
 With skill prepare them, and in parts divide :  
 Each on the coals the sep'rate morsels lays, 790  
 And hasty, snatches from the rising blaze.  
 With bread the glitt'ring canisters they load,  
 Which round the board Automedon bestow'd :  
 The chief himself to each his portion plac'd,  
 And each indulging shar'd in sweet repast. 795  
 When now the rage of hunger was repress'd,  
 The wond'ring hero eyes his royal guest :  
 No less the royal guest the hero eyes,  
 His god-like aspect and majestick size ;

v. 798. *The royal guest the hero eyes, &c.*] The poet omits no opportunity of praising his hero Achilles, and it is ob-

Here, youthful grace and noble fire engage ; 800  
And there, the mild benevolence of age.

Thus gazing long, the silence neither broke,  
(A solemn scene !) at length the father spoke.

Permit me now, below'd of Jove ! to steep  
My careful temples in the dew of sleep : 805

For, since the day that number'd with the dead

My hapless son, the dust has been my bed ;

Soft sleep, a stranger to my weeping eyes ;

My only food, my sorrows and my sighs !

'Till now, encourag'd by the grace you give, 810

I share thy banquet, and consent to live.

With that, Achilles bade prepare the bed,  
With purple soft, and shaggy carpets spread ;

servable that he now commends him for his more amiable qualities : he softens the terrible idea we have conceived of him, as a warrior, with several virtues of humanity ; and the angry, vindictive soldier is become calm and compassionate. In this place he makes his very enemy admire his personage, and be astonished at his manly beauty. So that though courage be his most distinguishing character, yet Achilles is admirable both for the endowments of mind and body.

*Ἐπιμελομένην*. The sense of this word differs in this place from that it usually bears ; it does not imply *τραχέτην* *ἰσχυρὴν*, any reproachful asperity of language, but *οὐκ ἐκείνην* *ψόλον*, the raising of a false fear in the old man, that he might not be concerned at his being lodged in the outermost part of the tent ; and by this method he gives Priam an opportunity of going away in the morning without observation. *Eustathius*.

Forth, by the flaming lights, they bend their way,  
 And place the couches, and the cov'rings lay. 815  
 Then he : Now father sleep, but sleep not here.  
 Consult thy safety, and forgive my fear,  
 Lest any Argive (at this hour awake,  
 To ask our counsel, or our orders take)  
 Approaching sudden to our open'd tent, 820  
 Perchance behold thee, and our grace prevent.  
 Should such report thy honour'd person here,  
 The king of men the ransom might defer ;  
 But say with speed, if ought of thy desire  
 Remains unask'd ; what time the rites require  
 T' inter thy Hector ? For, so long we stay 826  
 Our slaught'ring arm, and bid the hosts obey.  
 If then thy will permit (the monarch said)  
 To finish all due honours to the dead,  
 This, of thy grace accord : to thee are known  
 The fears of Ilion, clos'd within her town ; 831  
 And at what distance from our walls aspire  
 The hills of Ide, and forests for the fire.

v. 819. *To ask our counsel, or our orders take.*] The poet here shews the importance of Achilles in the army ; though Agamemnon be the general, yet all the chief commanders apply to him for advice : and thus he promises Priam a cessation of arms for several days, purely by his own authority. The method that Achilles took to confirm the truth of the cessation, agrees with the custom which we use at this day, he gave him his hand upon it.

— — — χαῖρα γέγονε  
 Ἑλλας δὲ γέγονε.

*Eustathius.*



Nine days to vent our sorrows I request,  
 The tenth shall see the fun'ral and the feast ; 835  
 The next, to raise his monument be giv'n ;  
 The twelfth we war, if war be doom'd by Heav'n !

This thy request (reply'd the chief) enjoy :  
 'Till then, our arms suspend the fall of Troy.

Then gave his hand at parting, to prevent 840  
 The old man's fears, and turn'd within the tent ;  
 Where fair Briseïs, bright in blooming charms,  
 Expects her hero with desiring arms.  
 But in the porch, the king and herald rest ;  
 Sad dreams of care yet wand'ring in their breast.  
 Now Gods and men the gifts of sleep partake ; 846  
 Industrious Hermes only was awake,  
 The king's return revolving in his mind,  
 To pass the ramparts, and the watch to blind.  
 The pow'r descending hover'd o'er his head : 850  
 And sleep'st thou, father ! (thus the vision said)  
 Now dost thou sleep, when Hector is restor'd ?  
 Nor fear the Grecian foes, or Grecian lord ?  
 Thy presence here shou'd stern Atrides see,  
 Thy still-surviving sons may sue for thee, 855  
 May offer all thy treasures yet contain,  
 To spare thy age ; and offer all in vain.

Wak'd with the word, the trembling fire arose,  
 And rais'd his friend : the God before him goes,  
 He joins the mules, directs them with his hand, 860  
 And moves in silence thro' the hostile land.

When now to Xanthus' yellow stream they drove,  
(Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove)  
The winged deity forsook their view,  
And in a moment to Olympus flew. 865

Now shed Aurora round her saffron ray,  
Sprung thro' the gates of light, and gave the day :  
Charg'd with their mournful load, to Ilion go  
The sage and king, majestically slow.  
Cassandra first beholds, from Ilion's spire, 870  
The sad procession of her hoary fire ;  
Then, as the pensive pomp advanc'd more near,  
(Her breathless brother stretch'd upon the bier)  
A show'r of tears o'erflows her beauteous eyes,  
Alarming thus all Ilion with her cries. 875

Turn here your steps, and here your eyes employ,  
Ye wretched daughters, and ye sons of Troy !  
If e'er ye rush'd in crouds, with vast delight  
To hail your hero glorious from the fight ; 879  
Now meet him dead, and let your sorrows flow !  
Your common triumph, and your common woe.

In thronging crouds they issue to the plains ;  
Nor man, nor woman, in the walls remains ;  
In ev'ry face the self-same grief is shown ;  
And Troy sends forth one universal groan. 885  
At Scæa's gates they meet the mourning wain,  
Hang on the wheels, and grovel round the slain.  
The wife and mother, frantick with despair,  
Kiss his pale cheek, and rend their scatter'd hair :

Thus wildly wailing, at the gates they lay ; 890  
 And there had sigh'd and sorrow'd out the day ;  
 But god-like Priam from the chariot rose ;  
 Forbear (he cry'd) this violence of woes,  
 First to the palace let the car proceed,  
 Then pour your boundless sorrows o'er the dead.

The waves of people at his word divide, 896  
 Slow rolls the chariot thro' the following tide ;  
 Ev'n to the palace the sad pomp they wait :  
 They weep, and place him on the bed of state.  
 A melancholy choir attend around, 900  
 With plaintive sighs, and musick's solemn sound :  
 Alternately they sing, alternate flow  
 Th' obedient tears, melodious in their woe.  
 While deeper sorrows groan from each full heart,  
 And nature speaks at ev'ry pause of art. 905

First to the corse the weeping comfort flew ;  
 Around his neck her milk-white arms she threw,

v. 900. *A melancholy choir, &c.*] This was a custom generally received, and which passed from the Hebrews, to the Greeks, Romans, and Asiatics. There were weepers by profession, of both sexes, who sung doleful tunes round the dead. Ecclesiasticus, chap. xii. v. 5. *When a man shall go into the house of his eternity, there shall encompass him weepers.* It appears from St. Matthew xi. 17. that children were likewise employed in this office. *Dacier.*

v. 906, &c. *The lamentations over Hector.*] The poet judiciously makes Priam to be silent in this general lamentation ; he has already borne a sufficient share in these sorrows, in the tent of Achilles, and said what grief can

And oh my Hector ! Oh my lord ! she cries,  
 Snatch'd in thy bloom from these desiring eyes !  
 Thou to the dismal realms for ever gone ! 910  
 And I abandon'd, desolate, alone !  
 An only son, once comfort of our pains,  
 Sad product now of hapless love remains !  
 Never to manly age that son shall rise,  
 Or with encreasing graces glad my eyes : 915  
 For Ilium now (her great defender slain)  
 Shall sink a smoking ruin on the plain.  
 Who now protects her wives with guardian care ?  
 Who saves her infants from the rage of war ?  
 Now hostile fleets must waft those infants o'er, 920  
 (Those wives must wait 'em) to a foreign shore !

dictate to a father and a king upon such a melancholy subject. But he introduces three women as chief mourners, and speaks only in general of the lamentation of the men of Troy, an excess of sorrow being unmanly : whereas these women might with decency indulge themselves in all the lamentation that fondness and grief could suggest. The wife, the mother of Hector, and Helen, are the three persons introduced ; and though they all mourn upon the same occasion, yet their lamentations are so different, that not a sentence that is spoken by the one, could be made use of by the other : Andromache speaks like a tender wife, Hecuba like a fond mother, and Helen mourns with sorrow rising from self-accusation : Andromache commends his bravery, Hecuba his manly beauty, and Helen his gentleness and humanity.

Homer is very concise in describing the funeral of Hector, which was but a necessary piece of conduct, after he had been so full in that of Patroclus.



Thou too my son ! to barb'rous climes shalt go,  
 The sad companion of thy mother's woe ;  
 Driv'n hence a slave before the victor's sword ;  
 Condemn'd to toil for some inhuman lord : 925  
 Or else some Greek whose father prest the plain,  
 Or son, or brother, by great Hector slain ;  
 In Hector's blood his vengeance shall enjoy,  
 And hurl thee headlong from the tow'rs of Troy.  
 For thy stern father never spar'd a foe : 930  
 Thence all these tears, and all this scene of woe !  
 Thence, many evils his sad parents bore,  
 His parents many, but his comfort more.  
 Why gav'st thou not to me thy dying hand ?  
 And why receiv'd not I thy last command ? 935  
 Some word thou would'st have spoke, which sadly  
     dear,  
 My soul might keep, or utter with a tear ;  
 Which never, never could be lost in air,  
 Fix'd in my heart, and oft' repeated there !

v. 934. *Why gav'st thou not to me thy dying hand ?*  
*And why receiv'd not I thy last command ?* ]

I have taken these two lines from Mr. Congreve, whose translation of this part was one of his first essays in poetry. He has very justly rendered the sense of Πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, *dictum prudens*, which is meant of the words of a dying man, or one in some dangerous exigence ; at which times what is spoken is usually something of the utmost importance, and delivered with the utmost care : which is the true signification of the epithet Πρὸς τὸν θάνατον in this place.

Thus to her weeping maids she makes her moan;  
Her weeping handmaids echo groan for groan. 941

The mournful mother next sustains her part.  
Oh thou, the best, the dearest to my heart!  
Of all my race thou most by Heav'n approv'd,  
And by th' immortals ev'n in death belov'd! 945  
While all my other sons in barb'rous bands  
Achilles bound, and sold to foreign lands,  
This felt no chains, but went a glorious ghost,  
Free and a hero, to the Stygian coast.

Sentenc'd, 'tis true, by his inhuman doom, 950  
Thy noble corse was dragg'd around the tomb,  
(The tomb of him thy warlike arm had slain)  
Ungen'rous insult, impotent and vain!  
Yet glow'ft thou fresh with ev'ry living grace;  
No mark of pain, or violence of face; 955  
Rofy and fair! as Phoebus' silver bow  
Dismiss'd thee gently to the shades below.

Thus spoke the dame, and melted into tears.  
Sad Helen next in pomp of grief appears:  
Fast from the shining sluices of her eyes 960  
Fall the round crystal drops, while thus she cries.

Ah dearest friend! in whom the Gods had  
join'd

The mildest manners with the bravest mind;  
Now twice ten years (unhappy years) are o'er  
Since Paris brought me to the Trojan shore; 965  
(O had I perish'd, e'er that form divine  
Seduc'd this soft, this easy heart of mine!)

Yet was it ne'er my fate, from thee to find  
 A deed ungentle, or a word unkind :  
 When others curst the auth'refs of their woe, 970  
 Thy pity check'd my sorrows in their flow :  
 If some proud brother ey'd me with disdain,  
 Or scornful sister with her sweeping train ;  
 Thy gentle accents soften'd all my pain.  
 For thee I mourn ; and mourn myself in thee, 975  
 The wretched source of all this misery !  
 The fate I caus'd, for ever I bemoan ;  
 Sad Helen has no friend, now thou art gone !  
 Thro' Troy's wide streets abandon'd shall I roam !  
 In Troy deserted, as abhorr'd at home ! 980

So spoke the fair, with sorrow-streaming eye :  
 Distressful beauty melts each stander-by ;  
 On all around th' infectious sorrow grows ;  
 But Priam check'd the torrent as it rose.  
 Perform, ye Trojans ! what the rites require, 985  
 And fell the forests for a fun'ral pyre ;  
 Twelve days, nor foes, nor secret ambush dread ;  
 Achilles grants these honours to the dead.

He spoke ; and at his word, the Trojan train  
 Their mules and oxen harness to the wain, 990  
 Pour thro' the gates, and fell'd from Ida's crown,  
 Roll back the gather'd forests to the town.  
 These toils continue nine succeeding days,  
 And high in air a silvan structure raise.  
 But when the tenth fair morn began to shine, 995  
 Forth to the pile was borne the man divine,

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And plac'd aloft : while all, with streaming eyes,  
Beheld the flames and rolling smokes arise.  
Soon as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,  
With rosy lustre streak'd the dewy lawn ; 1000  
Again the mournful crouds surround the pyre,  
And quench with wine the yet-remaining fire.  
The snowy bones his friends and brothers place  
(With tears collected) in a golden vase ;  
The golden vase in purple palls they roll'd, 1005  
Of softest texture, and inwrought with gold.  
Last o'er the urn the sacred earth they spread,  
And rais'd the tomb, memorial of the dead.  
(Strong guards and spies, 'till all the rites were done,  
Watch'd from the rising to the setting sun) 1010  
All Troy then moves to Priam's court again,  
A solemn, silent, melancholy train :  
Assembled there, from pious toil they rest,  
And sadly shar'd the last sepulchral feast.  
Such honours Ilion to her hero paid, 1015  
And peaceful slept the mighty Hector's shade.

THE END OF THE ILIAD.



WE have now past through the Iliad, and seen the anger of Achilles, and the terrible effects of it, at an end: as that only was the subject of the poem, and the nature of epick poetry would not permit our author to proceed to the event of the war, it may perhaps be acceptable to the common reader to give a short account of what happened to Troy and the chief actors in this poem, after the conclusion of it.

I need not mention that Troy was taken soon after the death of Hector, by the stratagem of the wooden horse, the particulars of which are described by Virgil in the second book of the *Æneis*.

Achilles fell before Troy, by the hand of Paris, by the shot of an arrow in his heel, as Hector had prophesied at his death, lib. xxii.

The unfortunate Priam was killed by Pyrrhus the son of Achilles.

Ajax, after the death of Achilles, had a contest with Ulysses for the armour of Vulcan, but being defeated in his aim, he slew himself through indignation.

Helen, after the death of Paris, married Deiphobus his brother, and at the taking of Troy betrayed him, in order to reconcile herself to Menelaus her first husband, who received her again into favour.

Agamemnon at his return was barbarously murdered by Ægysthus at the instigation of Clytem-

nestra his wife, who in his absence had dishonoured his bed with Ægyſthus.

Diomed after the fall of Troy was expelled his own country, and scarce escaped with life from his adulterous wife Ægiale; but at last was received by Daunus in Apulia, and shared his kingdom: it is uncertain how he died.

Nestor lived in peace, with his children, in Pylos his native country.

Ulyſſes alſo after innumerable troubles by ſea and land, at laſt returned in ſafety to Ithaca, which is the ſubject of Homer's Odyſſeys.

I muſt end theſe notes by diſcharging my duty to two of my friends, which is the more an indiſpenſable piece of juſtice, as the one of them is ſince dead: the merit of their kindneſs to me will appear infinitely the greater, as the taſk they undertook was in its own nature, of much more labour, than either pleaſure or reputation. The larger part of the extracts from Euſtathius, together with ſeveral excellent obſervations, were ſent me by Mr. Broome: and the whole eſſay upon Homer was written, upon ſuch memoirs as I had collected, by the late Dr. Parnell, archdeacon of Clogher in Ireland: how very much that gentleman's friendſhip prevailed over his genius, in detaining a writer of his ſpirit in the drudgery of removing the rubbiſh of paſt pedants, will ſoon appear to the world, when they ſhall ſee thoſe beautiful pieces of poetry,

the publication of which he left to my charge, almost with his dying breath.

For what remains, I beg to be excused from the ceremonies of taking leave at the end of my work ; and from embarrassing myself, or others, with any defences or apologies about it. But instead of endeavouring to raise a vain monument to myself, of the merits or difficulties of it (which must be left to the world, to truth, and to posterity) let me leave behind me a memorial of my friendship, with one of the most valuable men, as well as finest writers, of my age and country: one who has tried, and knows by his own experience, how hard an undertaking it is to do justice to Homer: and one, who (I am sure) sincerely rejoices with me at the period of my labours. To him therefore, having brought this long work to a conclusion, I desire to *dedicate* it ; and to have the honour and satisfaction of placing together, in this manner, the names of Mr. CONGREVE, and of

March 25,  
1720.



A. POPE.

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Τῶν Θεῶν δὲ εἰποιτα—τὸ μὴ ἐπὶ πλέον με προόφαι ἐν Ποιητικῇ καὶ ἄλλοις ἐπιτηδεύμασι, ἐν οἷς ἴσως ἂν κατεσχέθην, εἰ ἡσθόμην ἑμαυτὸν πύδων προΐοντα. M. AUREL. ANTON. *de seipso*. l. i. §, 14.

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P O E T I C A L I N D E X  
T O  
H O M E R ' s I L I A D .

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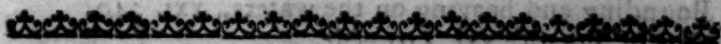
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